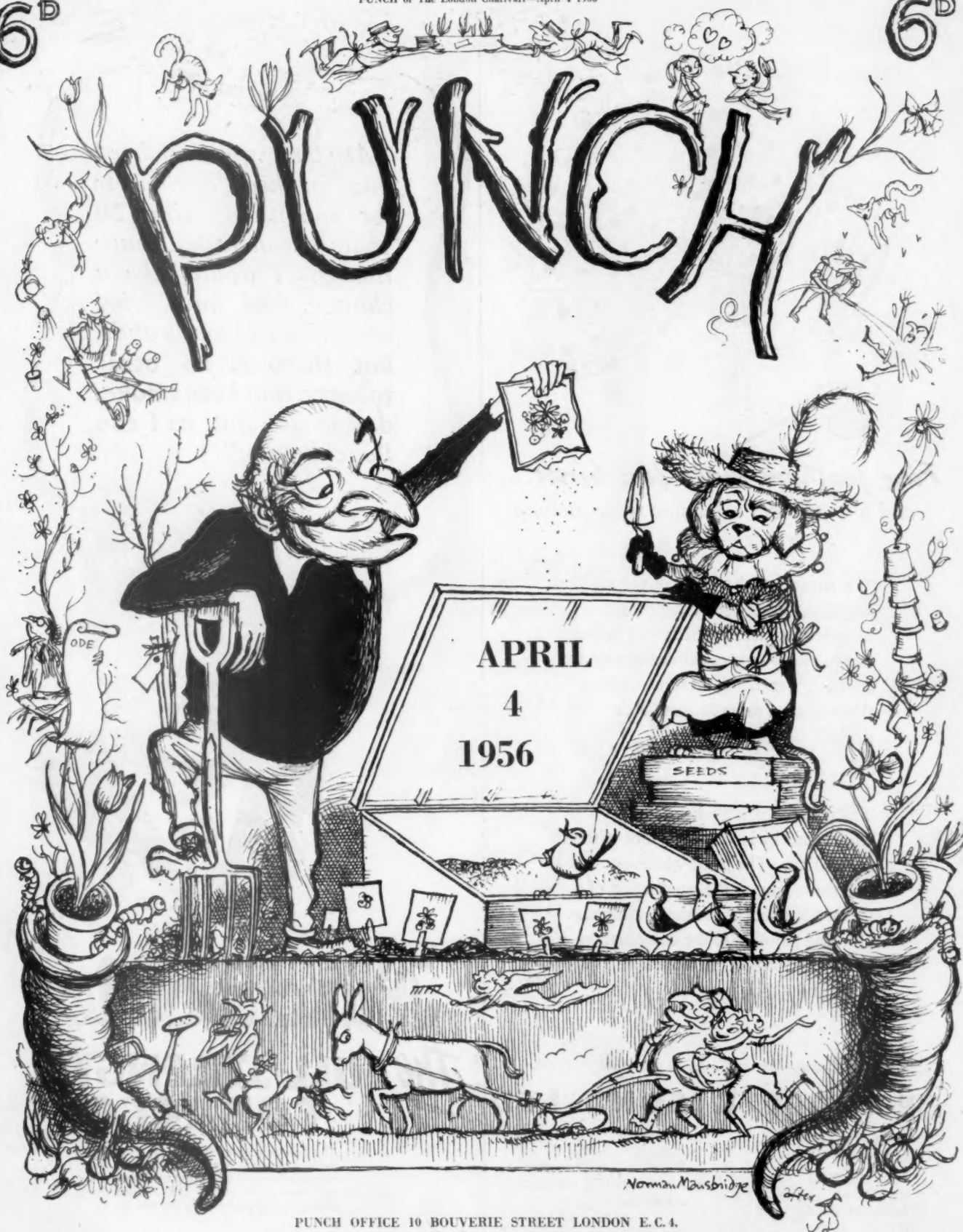


6<sup>D</sup>

PUNCH or The London Charivari—April 4 1956

6<sup>D</sup>

PUNCH OFFICE 10 BOUVERIE STREET LONDON E.C.4.



*Fine feathers make fine birds.....  
and fine printers make fine reproductions*

We appreciate that most of the sayings regarding pride—such as “proud as peacocks” and “pride goeth before destruction”—are rather derogatory, but on the other hand there is without doubt such a thing as justifiable pride.

The pride which we have in our workmanship is definitely not without foundation. The pride which our craftsmen take in the production of a fine work of art is not mere vainglory. Our fine printing is the combination of all that is best in technique, ideas and quality.

*Catalogues and Commemoration Books, 50 years, 100 years, etc.*

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*We take pride in our wrapping  
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Associated with Alf Cooke Ltd., and Norbury Printers Ltd., as Universal Printers Ltd.

*“As a heavy pipe smoker I have smoked Punchbowl for something like 10 years. Sometimes I have thought I would like a change, and have tried some eight or ten brands, but there is no other tobacco that I can smoke, day in day out, as I can Punchbowl.”*

This letter  
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Square, W.C.1

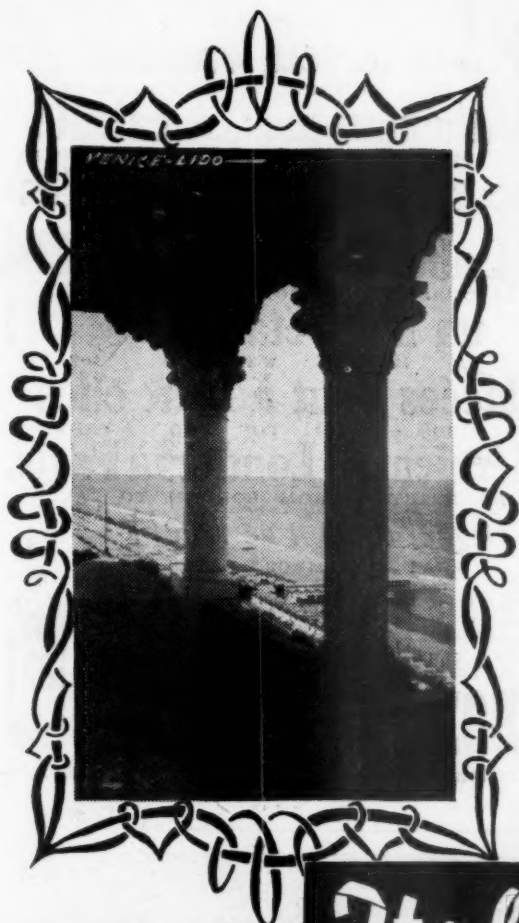


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This famous tobacco is also available in two other strengths. In the mild form it is called Parson's Pleasure whilst the medium variety is known as Barney's. Each of the three strengths is priced at 4/7½ the ounce.

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Along the enchanting Italian Coastline, places await you in a riot of colour and blue sea.



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overheard in the changing rooms



"You prefer zips I see."

"Rather—they keep trousers in good shape and they fasten securely."

"Um, no embarrassing moments, eh?"

"Never . . . the SWIFT is a special SELF-LOCKING fly fastener and is absolutely reliable. Just look . . . ."

"Smart idea, that. Must see that they're on all my suits in future."

"I've got 'em on all mine. Not only are they SWIFT, but they're sure!"

**SWIFT** SELF-LOCKING TROUSER-FLY FASTENERS

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*Little glasses which hold a wealth of pleasure and satisfaction when filled with Glayva . . . . .*



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**NOW** two styles of collar  
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collar-attached  
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**30/-**

The Exmoor shirt gets better than ever! That strong, good looking, long lasting coat-style shirt by Luvisca now gives you a choice of collars—semi-polo or cut-away.

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A new Luvisca-Exmoor short-sleeved jacket shirt! Typically Luvisca in its good cut and strong cloth.

cut for comfort  
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Courtaulds  
Tested-Quality



LX-10

REGD.

Luvisca Limited, Exeter.

**M**on neveu, étudiant en  
MY NEPHEW, WHO STUDIES  
**mathématiques, a calculé**  
MATHEMATICS, HAS CALCULATED  
**que si toutes les bouteilles**  
THAT IF ALL THE BOTTLES  
**de Dubonnet bues en**  
OF DUBONNET CONSUMED IN  
**un mois étaient**  
A MONTH WERE  
**placées bout à bout elles**  
PLACED END TO END THEY  
**relieraient Londres à Paris.**  
WOULD STRETCH FROM LONDON TO PARIS.  
*(Quel chemin de rêve!)*  
WHAT A PRIMROSE PATH!

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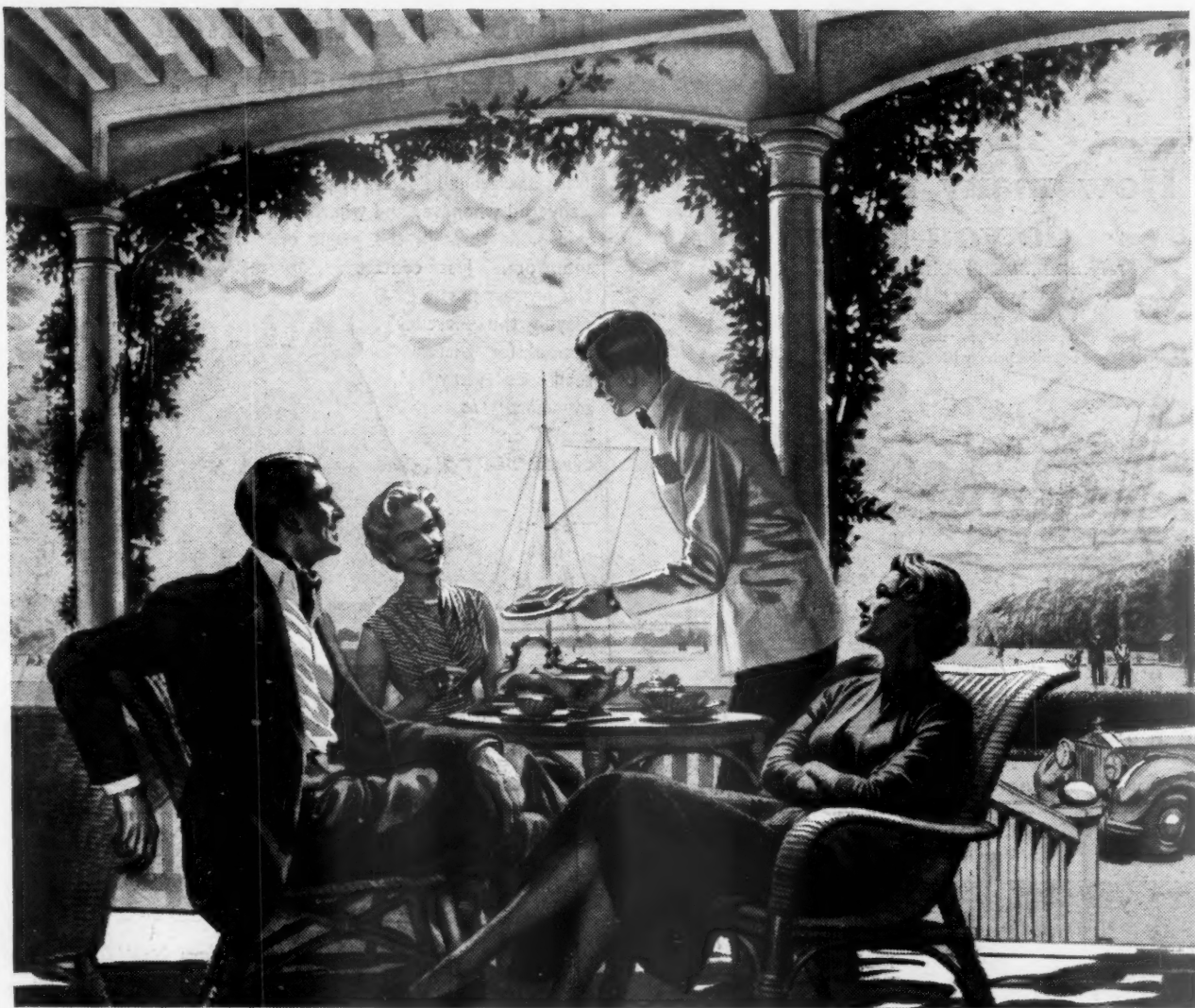
Sodium Lighting at Chorley

Photograph by courtesy of Automatic Telephone & Electric Co., Ltd.

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INSURANCE COMPANY LTD

CHIEF ADMINISTRATION: 7 CHANCERY LANE, LONDON, WC2





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*In all parts of the world, wherever  
the game of golf is played at its best, there, too, you  
will find Benson & Hedges cigarettes.*

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THE ROYAL BAGHDAD

It happens so often as to be beyond mere coincidence that, at those times when contentment in relaxation is heightened into luxury, the cigarettes are by **BENSON and HEDGES**—cigarettes so carefully made, from the finest of fine tobaccos.



BY APPOINTMENT  
TO HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN  
TOBACCONISTS  
BENSON & HEDGES LTD

*When only the best will do*



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Pansy... Viola... Heartsease... Three-faces-under-a-hood.

You can probably add to this list, but as a garden lover you admire all flowers especially when they are 'framing' a beautiful velvety lawn, and . . .

... there's only **One** name for the finest lawn mower  
**Ransomes**  
PRECISION BUILT . . . FOR LOVELIER LAWNS



12" Ace MK 2.  
Price £5.12.10.  
Grass box concave  
extra £1.0.9.  
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Price £13.19.3  
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## Flowers . . . the perfect gift for every occasion . . .

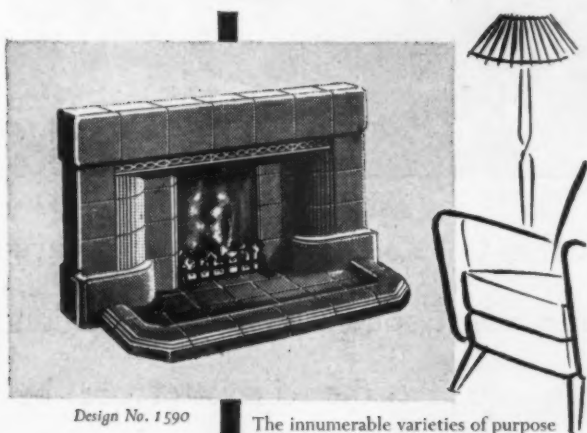
And it is so easy to have beautiful fresh untravelling flowers or plants delivered whenever and wherever you wish through the magic of Interflora. Just contact the nearest florist displaying the 'Mercury' symbol for guaranteed delivery anywhere at home or overseas.

Say it  
with  
flowers

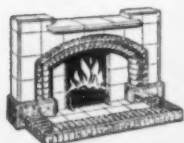


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The innumerable varieties of purpose and taste are adequately catered for in our wide selection of models. But throughout, three factors remain constant—excellent quality, brilliant design and superlative craftsmanship. For the benefit of those who demand the best, they are available from stockists everywhere.

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Made on the Tiptree farm from selected, luscious, ripe strawberries—grown on the farm—and pure sugar. This high fruit content Conserve is enjoyed by connoisseurs all over the world. Why not try a jar yourself? Obtainable from all good grocers, or the name of your nearest stockist will be sent on request to Dept. I

By appointment to  
Her Majesty The Queen  Jam and Marmalade  
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(9)

## BARON TAKES TEA WITH THE LADY DOUGLAS OF KIRTLESIDE

The Lady Douglas of Kirtleside, wife of Marshal of the Royal Air Force, Lord Douglas of Kirtleside, G.C.B., M.C., D.F.C., poses for a characteristic study by eminent photographer, Baron, in the sitting room of their modern flat in London. Lord Douglas was Commander-in-Chief of Fighter and Coastal Commands during the war. Later he was British Military Governor in Germany, and is now Chairman of B.E.A. Since her marriage last year, Lady Douglas has become a devotee of aviation: now she is learning to fly.



**BARON:** Now, Lady Douglas, I suppose I had better start right away—otherwise you'll be taking wing before I get you properly in focus.

**LADY DOUGLAS:** Well, much as I love the air, I do come down to earth sometimes, Mr. Baron. Anyhow, I've finished my flying lesson for today . . . so we do have a little time. Can I tempt you to a cup of tea?

**BARON:** Indeed, you can. I've been eyeing that exquisite service with a mixture of envy and anticipation. Italian, isn't it?

**LADY DOUGLAS:** Yes, it is. My husband picked it up some years ago on one of his visits to Rome. Actually, I should have had Wedgwood on the table . . . you see, my mother is a great-niece of Josiah Wedgwood.

**BARON:** Really? Then this will be your own special blend of tea, too, I'll wager.

**LADY DOUGLAS:** Well, yes and no. Actually, it's Brooke Bond 'Choicest' blend. We like it very much, and the great thing is we can simply order it with the rest of the groceries. Always fresh and no fuss. Take sugar?





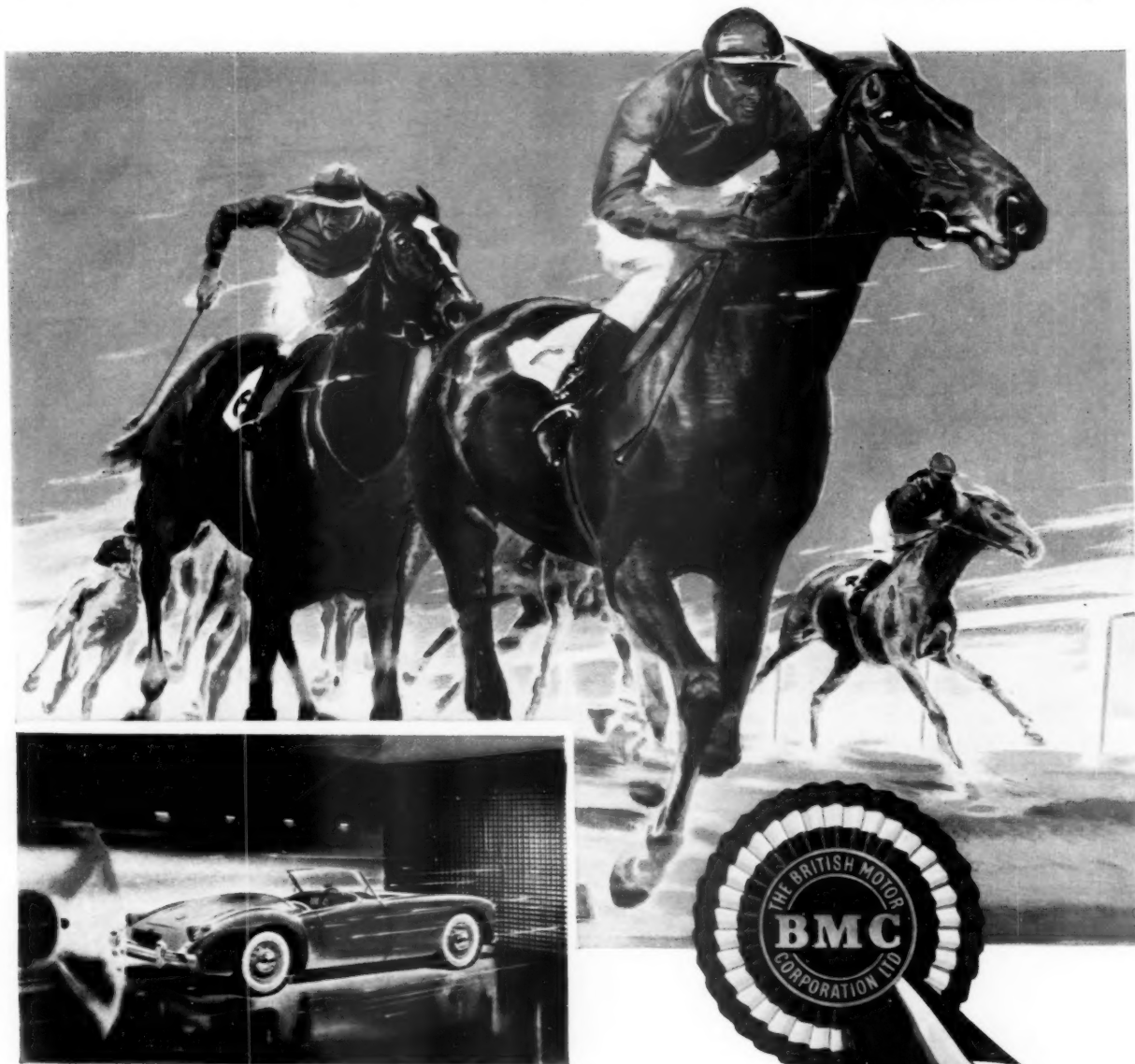
finest  
petrol

*in the World*

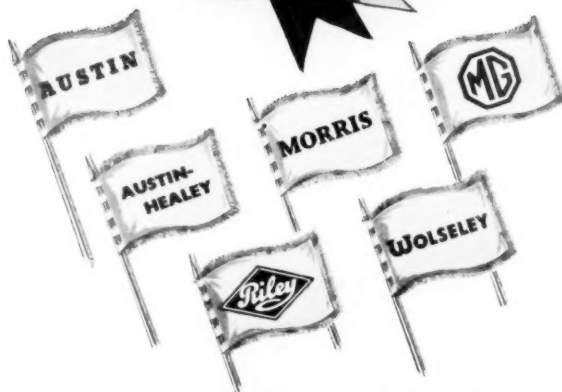


Punch

# BREEDING COMES OUT—in extra speed!



**All cars in the B.M.C. range are streamlined to give you extra miles-per-hour:** There isn't an ounce of unwanted flesh on the flashing limbs and rippling flanks of the champion racehorse. Nature and man have combined to make it lean, yet powerful and fast. But the ability to produce thoroughbreds is not confined to the racing studs. In the wind-tunnels of the B.M.C. development department, engineers submit body designs of prototype cars to the most searching aerodynamic tests to reduce frontal area and wind drag. The result? Extra performance without extra petrol consumption. Road tests, heat tests, cold tests and dust tests—these are but a few of the other research-checks which go on continually at B.M.C. The quest is for perfection. That is why the cars of the B.M.C. range are as reliable as human ingenuity can make them.

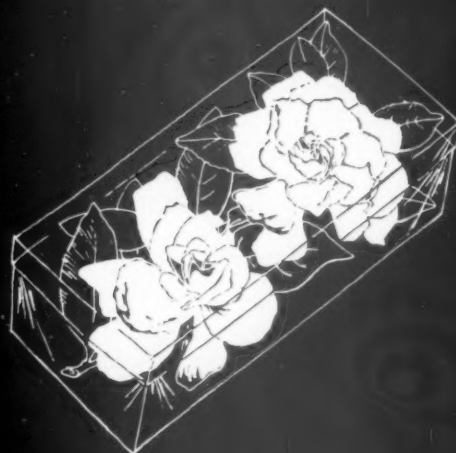


## THE BRITISH MOTOR CORPORATION LTD

TWO OUT OF EVERY FIVE VEHICLES ON THE ROADS OF BRITAIN ARE BUILT BY B.M.C.



The U.S.A.  
is  
50 feet  
from  
Europe



**50 FEET** between Europe and the U.S.A.? That's what we said. Step across the 50-foot gangway at Southampton and onto the Blue Riband s.s. "United States," or the beautiful s.s. "America," and you are *in* the U.S.A.

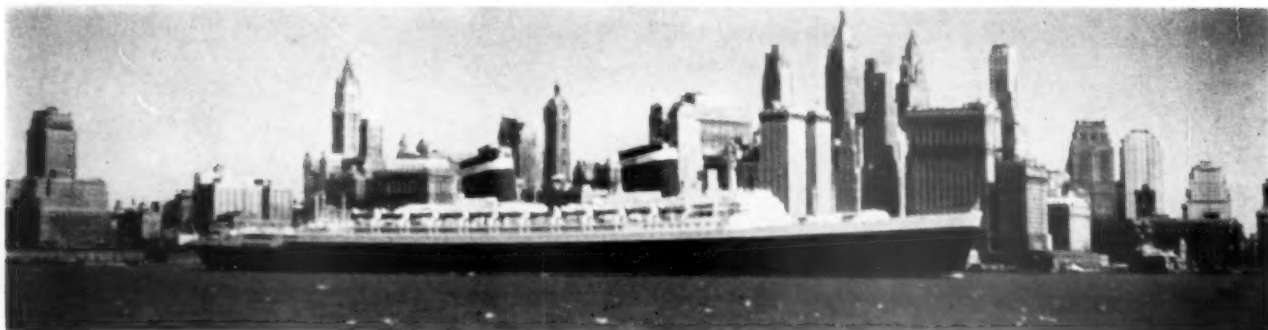
A few days of comfort and good living in the best tradition are all that lie between you and New York. The food and wines are of unsurpassed excellence. There are swimming pools, deck games, dancing every night to superb Meyer Davis bands, and the latest movies (the "United States" is equipped with CinemaScope in First, Cabin and Tourist Class theatres). But, of course, the choice is yours; it's just as easy to rest and relax if you prefer.

You travel fast, yet there's never any sense of hurry. Your fare is payable in sterling and there are dollar-credits available for your expenses on board.

*She's enjoying her first really American drink—mixed as only an American barman knows how.*

# United States Lines

SEE YOUR TRAVEL AGENT OR UNITED STATES LINES, 50 PALL MALL, LONDON, S.W.1 • 7 THE STRAND, LIVERPOOL





*"Now tell me how  
you like my coffee"*



*Dress by Atrima*

**LYONS**  
FOR  
REAL COFFEE

**W**HY DO THE MOST SUCCESSFUL HOSTESSES-  
ABOUT-TOWN USE LYONS PURE COFFEE?

There's a very simple reason . . . Freshly-ground coffee beans will only make the best coffee if the beans themselves are fresh. The coffee beans used by Lyons are roasted and ground at the peak of their freshness, then the coffee is *immediately* aroma-sealed (by an exclusive Lyons process) in the well-known green tins. *It is the freshest coffee you can buy.*





*...in this little box  
are ten of the sharpest blades  
that you can buy...*

They're ready unwrapped to thumb into your  
razor — and cost no more than in a packet.

10 Blue Gillette Blades in a Dispenser—3/-



# Punch

## CHARIVARIA



**E**NTIRELY new possibilities on the industrial front are opened up by the organization department of the Liberal Party, with the suggestion that "employers should offer workers ordinary shares instead of wage increases." It would at least be refreshing to see a few strikes for higher dividends.

### Has-Been

NEWSPAPER readers feel a welling of gratitude for the film *The Man who Never Was*, which has transformed their morning pages. "The Car that Never Was," "The Kiss that Never Was," "The Baby who Never Was" and "The Envoy who Never Was" have already figured in headlines, with many other similar ploys doubtless to come. All in all, it looks as if we may have got rid of that damned "Thin Man" at last.

### Couched for the Spring

AN American survey, reporting that there are more neurotics in that country than in any other and that, according to present trends, one out of



every twelve American children born each year is "heading for mental disorder," adds that psychiatrists are working overtime. Getting results, too.

### What Price Glory?

MANY must envy and admire the single-mindedness of the one-subject journalist. When floods engulf homes the gardening correspondent writes about soggy lawns; plans for slum clearance only touch the architectural expert on his sore point about ugly modern brick colours. City editors display a singular dedication. One wrote an

article recently which opened with a shrewd survey of Middle East troubles, assessing the geographical influence of British and American interests, and recalling the intransigence of Dr. Moussadek. It ended: "At 6½ its yield may seem small, but it might be the oil share which one would pick to-day, if safety was the main motive."

### COMING SHORTLY

**W**ORK has been resumed in the printing trade in London in time for us to provide a full-size issue this week, though not, unfortunately, in time to restore the red to the cover.

Next week's issue will be the Spring Number with, as usual, a cover in full colour.

In the issue of April 18 we shall celebrate the arrival in this country of Marshal Bulganin and Mr. Khrushchev.

The issue of April 25 will have a full-colour cover and a special Homes and Gardens section.

### Temper of the People

"MONACO Wedding on TV?" says a news item. The question-mark suggests a disturbing blindness to reality in British newspaper offices. Anyone within a stone's throw of the public pulse must know that if the Monaco wedding isn't on TV the resulting rioting by six million viewers can end only in civil war.

### Take As Read

NEWS that Mr. Mintoff was again in London found its way as usual into short, foot - of - column paragraphs. Readers are getting a bit tired of these, and a suggestion is that in future they should be informed when Mr. Mintoff isn't in London.

### Exclusive

ONE dispatch from Moscow on the reception held for the Danish Prime Minister described how Marshal

Bulganin playfully ruffled the hair of a Western journalist and asked him "What are you writing?" It is now known, of course, that he was writing that Marshal Bulganin had playfully ruffled his hair and asked him what he was writing.

### Do Not Feed the Spirals

INFLATION touches all. It has once more been found necessary to raise admission charges to the London Zoo to meet the costs of redecoration and



increased keepers' wages. It is to be hoped that this will be the last rise in charges, and that future demands will be met by charging the animals entertainment tax.

### Birds of a Feather

CONTRIBUTORS to the Russian Encyclopædia are faced with drastic revisions under the entry Stalin, J. V. As some time is likely to elapse before the details of deconsecration are ratified in official form, a labour-saving interim step might be to replace the Stalin passage with a gummed slip saying: "For a rough character sketch see under Nicholas II."

### Trouble Spots

THERE some wad be to ca' Berlin  
The pouter-keg' and a' that,  
Or blame the doofu' plight we're in  
On Chiang Kai-shek and a' that;  
Waesucks! on dinsome joys tae feast  
Wi' Bulge and Khrush and a' that:  
The weird' is in the Middle East,  
Amman's Amman for a' that.

1. Powder barrel  
3. Alas!

2. Doleful  
4. Destiny



# The Temptation

By R. G. G. PRICE

IN these tough-minded times, humorous literature is no longer the product of incompetence. Lovable failures have given place to the hard, the versatile and the clever. I am a sucker for literary fashion myself and nobody more vehemently repudiates the whimsically maladroitness than I do. It is infuriating that Nature has designed me as the typical humorist's butt and narrator of thirty years ago. I am clumsy. My knots always come undone. I forget things you would think it impossible for anybody to forget. Instead of being sardonic I am apologetic. I am victim, not victor. All this material is unusable. On paper I have to be the kind of man who remembers quotations, while in life I am the kind of man who hints and hints until somebody oils the lawn-mower for him.

Nature has now attacked my literary virtue from a new angle. I was helping to wash up when a poltergeist took the free half of the plate I was holding and bent it until it came in two. Poltergeists, like collapsible four-posters and children who ask for help with home-work and proverb-sucking rustics, are part of the equipment of the older generation of humorous writers. They have no place in the comic world of to-day. I tried to

pretend that I had been clumsy and dropped the plate, but my mother-in-law, who was watching my work closely, said quite firmly that she saw it bend. A few days later the poltergeist neatly flicked a glass from a tray that I was carrying. This was becoming a nuisance and in my creed nuisances are not to be laughed at but laughed down; with a derisive jeer one drives straight through them. For a bit, when there were odd bangs and doors were opened without an opener, I simply took no notice.

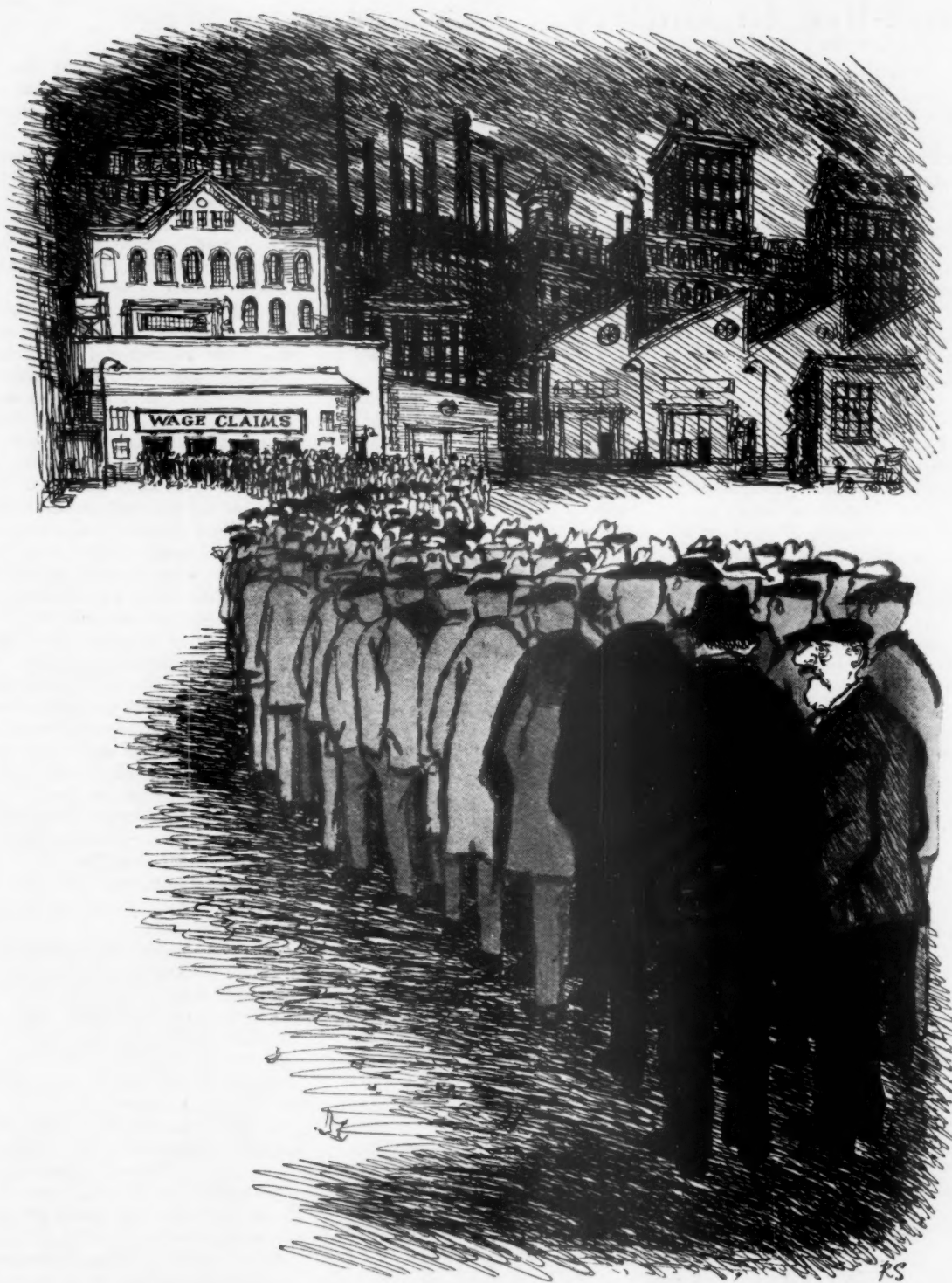
One day, like a fool, I complained in conversation that it was difficult to concentrate on the newspapers because of poltergeists; I still think that being curtly irritated by a nuisance is a "permitted" reaction. At once the story began to spread and was seized on by people who were looking out for a way of bringing me gently into conversations without falling back on the one about my giving up smoking. When I was asked about the poltergeist there was a strong temptation to invent rather charming things for it to do, even to invent a whimsical name for it—Mellors, perhaps, or Tubby. As it did less and less my temptation increased. I was, anyway, doubtful whether it really was a

poltergeist at all. It did not throw things in a curious curving flight and there was no adolescent girl in the house. I hoped the phenomena would not start rumours.

The lull ended when it began ringing the door-bell at a quarter past eight every night. This was much more unsettling. It was not a mad ringing, such as might be expected of an unborn spirit drunk on the wonders of electricity, but a firm, impatient pressure on the bell. Once the door had been opened and shut there was no more ringing. This suggested that something invisible but sufficiently solid to be stopped by a door had got inside. Soon we simply ignored it and it would finally stop ringing and go away. One evening some friends called at a quarter past eight and we ignored them too until they began banging and calling through the letter-box that they knew we were there. When we blamed our discourtesy on the poltergeist they obviously thought it was a poor excuse and that we had simply been playing 'possum. However, they mentioned the incident to other friends who had heard the beginning of the story and all the interest flared up again. It was impossible not to make conversational capital out of it, although poltergeists do undeniably come under the general heading of domestic tribulation and as such are taboo. How our forefathers would have laughed to think of a householder's trying to paper a room haunted by a poltergeist or of a poltergeist in the boot of a honeymooners' car or making a fourth in a boat.

My unease has now been increased by shyness in mentioning, yet an overwhelming compulsion to mention, that the poltergeist has begun to steal nut-crackers; pair after pair have disappeared. I suppose that it does not simply make them disappear altogether but uses them as apports. Somewhere there will be a family which is delighted when the usually drab and geological offerings that materialize are varied with gleaming instruments. I have, I confess, a shameful yearning for the poltergeist to act quaintly symmetrical and bring us the other family's nuts; but unless I can read some social significance into the exchange I must crush the yearning down.





"Does this remind you of anything?"

# Good-bye to Butlers

By P. G. WODEHOUSE

IT was only the other day that I was compelled to demolish a critic who had given me the sleeve across the windpipe for, as he asserted, writing too much about Earls, and now darned if another critic hasn't started a second front and is saying that I write too much about butlers. (Boy, my fly-swatter and the insecticide.)

It is not the first time that a complaint of this nature has been lodged. "Why is it," people are always saying, "that Wodehouse writes so much about butlers? Is there no way of abating this nuisance?" Well, I'll tell you. Since I was a slip of a boy these fauna have always fascinated me. For forty years I have omitted no word or act to keep them in the forefront of public thought. If I was not writing about a butler called Keggs, I was writing about butlers called Phipps, Murgatroyd or Skidmore. (Jeeves, of course, is not a butler, he is a gentleman's personal gentleman.)

And now... one has to face it... butlers have ceased to be.

It is possible that at this point you will try to bring the roses back to my cheeks by mentioning a recent case in the London courts where a young peer was charged with biting a lady friend in the leg and much of the evidence was given by "the butler." I read about that too, and it cheered me up for a moment. But only for a moment. I told myself cynically that this "butler" was probably just another of these modern makeshifts. No doubt in many English homes there is still buttlng of a sort going on, but it is done by ex-batmen,

promoted odd-job boys and so forth, sprightly young men not to be ranked as butlers by those who, like myself, were round and about London in 1903 and saw the real thing. Butlers? These chinless popinjays? Faugh! if you will permit me the expression. I met a man the other day who has a butler, and when I congratulated him on this he nodded moodily. "Yes," he said, "Wilberforce is all right, I suppose. Does his work well and all that sort of thing. But I wish I could break him of that habit of his of sliding down the banisters."

The real crusted vintage butler passed away with Edward the Seventh. We aficionados tried our best to pretend that the Georgian Age had changed nothing, but it had. The post-first-world-war butler was a mere synthetic substitute for the ones we used to know. When we old dodderers speak of butlers we are thinking of what used to lurk behind the front doors of Mayfair at the turn of the century.

Those were the days of what—because they took place at tea time—were known as "morning calls." At five in the afternoon you put on the old frock coat (with the white piping inside the waistcoat), polished up the old top hat (a drop of stout helped the gloss), slid a glove over your left hand (you carried the other one) and went out to pay morning calls. You mounted the steps of some stately home, you pulled the bell, and suddenly the door opened and there stood an august figure, weighing some sixteen stone on the hoof, with mauve cheeks, three chins, supercilious

lips and popping, gooseberry eyes that raked you with a forbidding stare, as if you were something the carrion crow had deposited on the doorstep. "Not at all what we have been accustomed to," those bulging eyes seemed to say.

That, at least, was the message I always read in them, due no doubt to my extreme youth and the fact, of which I never ceased to be aware, that my brother's frock coat and my cousin George's trousers did not begin to fit me. A certain anaemia of the exchequer caused me in those days to go about in the discarded clothes of relatives, and it was this that once enabled me to see that rarest of all sights, a laughing butler. I will come back to this later. Wait for the story of the laughing butler.

My acquaintance with butlers and my awe of them started at a very early age. My parents being in Hong Kong most of the time when I was in the knickerbocker phase, I was passed during my holidays from aunt to aunt. Several of these aunts were the wives of clergymen, which meant official calls at the local great houses, and when they paid these official calls they always took me along. Why, I have never been able to understand, for even at the age of ten I was a social bust, contributing little or nothing to the feast of reason and flow of soul. The thing generally ended in my hostess smiling one of those painful smiles and suggesting that it would be nice for your little nephew to go and have tea in the Servants' Hall. And she was right. I loved it.

My mind to-day is fragrant with memories of kindly footmen and vivacious parlourmaids. In their society I forgot to be shy and kidded back and forth with the best of them. If they ever wrote their memoirs they probably described me as the life of the party. And then, like the monstrous crow in *Through the Looking Glass*, in would come the butler, and the quips would die on our lips. "The young gentleman is wanted," he would say morosely, and the young gentleman would shamle out, feeling like \$30.

It was only in what my biographers will speak of as my later London period—circa 1930—when I was in the chips and an employer of butlers that I came





to know them well and receive their confidences. By that time I had reached the age when the hair whitens, the waistline expands and the terrors of youth leave us. The turning point came when I realized one morning that, while I was on the verge of fifty, my butler was a mere kid of forty-six. It altered the whole situation. One likes to unbend with the youngsters, and I unbent with this slip of a boy. From tentative discussions of the weather we progressed until I was telling him what hell it was to get stuck half-way through a novel, and he was telling me of former employers of his and how the butler's cross is that he has to stand behind his employer's chair night after weary night and listen to the funny noise he makes over his soup. You serve the soup and stand back and clench your hands. "Now comes the funny noise," you say to yourself. Night after night after night. This explains what in my youth had always puzzled me, the universal gloom of butlers.

Only once, as I mentioned earlier, have I heard a butler laugh, on a certain night in the year 1903, when I had been invited to dinner (Why? Heaven knows) at a particularly stately home and, owing to the friend to whom in some of my stories I have given the name of Ukridge having borrowed my dress clothes without telling me, had to attend the function in a primitive suit of soup and fish which had recently been bequeathed to me by my uncle Hugh, a man who stood six feet four and weighed a matter of seventeen stone.

Even as I dressed, the things seemed roomy. It was not, however, till the fish course that I realized how roomy they were, when, glancing down, I suddenly observed the trousers mounting like a rising tide over my shirt front. I pushed them back, but I knew I was fighting a losing battle. I was up against the same trouble that bothered King Canute. Eventually, when I was helping myself to something and was off my guard, the tide swept up as far as my white tie, and it was then that Higgs or Briggs or Fotheringay, or whatever his name was, uttered a sound like a bursting paper bag and hurried from the room with his hand over his mouth, squaring himself with his Guild later, I believe, with the plea that he had had some kind of fit.



Among other things which contributed to make butlers gloomy was the fact that so many of their employers were sparkling raconteurs. Only a butler, my butler said, can realize what it means to a butler to be wedged against the sideboard, unable to escape, and watch his employer working the conversation round to the point where he will be able to tell that good story of his which he, the butler, has heard so often before. It was when my butler mentioned this, with a kindly word of commendation to me for never having said anything even remotely clever and entertaining since he had entered my service, that I at last found myself understanding the inwardness of a rather peculiar episode of my early manhood.

A mutual friend had taken me to lunch at the house of W. S. Gilbert at Harrow Weald, and midway through the meal the great man began to tell a story. It was one of those very long, deceptively dull stories where you make the build-up as tedious as you can and pause before you reach the point, so as to stun the audience with the unexpected snapperoo. In other words, a story which is pretty awful till the last line, when everything becomes joy and jollity.

Well, sir, there was Sir William Schwenk Gilbert telling this long story, and there was I, a piefaced lad in my brother's frock coat and my cousin George's trousers, drinking it respectfully in. It did not seem to be very

funny, but I knew it must be, because this was W. S. Gilbert telling it, so when the pause came, I laughed.

I had rather an individual laugh in those days, something like one of those gas explosions which slay six. Infectious, I suppose you would call it, for the other guests, seeming a little puzzled, as if they had expected something better from the author of *The Mikado*, also laughed politely, and conversation became general. And it was at this point that I caught my host's eye.

I shall always remember the glare of pure hatred which I saw in it. If you have seen photographs of Gilbert, you will be aware that even when in repose his face was inclined to be formidable and his eye not the sort of eye you would willingly catch. And now his face was far from being in repose. His eyes, beneath their beetling brows, seared me like a flame. In order to get away from them, I averted my gaze and found myself encountering that of the butler. His eyes were shining with a dog-like devotion. For some reason which I was unable to understand at the time, I had made his day. And now I know what that reason was. I suppose he had heard that story rumble to its conclusion at least twenty times, probably more, and I had killed it.

And now Gilbert has gone to his rest, and his butler has gone to his rest, and all the other butlers of those great days have gone to their rests. But I like to think that we shall all meet beyond the river.



*"Do me a favour, will you? Stop calling me shipmate!"*

## Author! Author!

By HONOR TRACY

**I**N a bed-sitting-room at the Shangrila Guest House for Single Gentlemen, a man was frowning at a virgin page of foolscap. He was an author, a promising youngster of forty or so. Three novels had already appeared under his name and the critics to a man had hailed each of them as "competent." Thanks to this, he was now in steady work as reviewer to a paper in Northern Ireland.

At the moment he was trying to begin Chapter One of his fourth. His ambition had been with this to move up into the "immensely readable" class, with a view to employment in an advertising agency. It had been in his mind to write a really perceptive study of boyhood; but now that he took up his pen he could find nothing whatever to say. To compose an immensely readable first sentence seemed beyond his powers; even the vein of competence had apparently worked itself out. He

stared through the cracked windows at the damp, dark houses over the way and, biting his nails, wondered if publishers sued for the return of advances.

All at once there was a knock at the door and a small, nondescript individual, whom the author vaguely recognized as a fellow guest, shambled into the room. The door swung to behind him with a hideous bang: at which the intruder clapped a hand first over his mouth, as if in apology, and then to his heart, as if to indicate that he was highly strung. And indeed everything about him pointed to emotional disturbance. He stuttered, he ran his fingers through his hair, he stood with one foot resting on the toe of the other; and when he looked at the author, his eyes screwed tightly up with fluttering lashes, as if the sight were too fearful for him to bear.

"You couldn't be bothered with me," he gasped at length. "I'm not clever. I'm not even what I call educated. I'm

a nobody. One of the million. And I know it. I *accept* it." Here he paused, overcome, while the author shivered a little with impatience. "But you're different," he presently resumed with a rush. "You're what I call creative. You're what I should like to be. You write books, you do. I never met a real live author before. Well, I haven't really met you, come to that. I just barged in, the nerve. But I had to do it. The impulse would not be gainsaid. I had to barge in and tell you how proud I am to reside under the roof that shelters you. And now I've done it, that's all," he concluded with a touch of defiance, and ran from the room.

In a few seconds he was back. "I don't suppose you would shake hands," he shouted. "No. I couldn't expect it. No."

The author rose at once and shook hands.

"Nothing high-hat about you," the

visitor stated. "You shake hands like anyone else. From that I should deduce that you were Somebody, even without knowing. Not one of these puffed-up pseudo-intellectuals."

He stood blinking for a moment or two and rushed out, slamming the door.

The author seated himself at the table once again. *It was that quiet hour of a winter's day when the red glow of the sun. It was that magic hour of a wintry day. That tranquil hour? When the crimson stain of the dying sun? It was half-past four of a December afternoon when Samuel Weaver. Samuel Hitchcock? It was half-past four of a drear winter's day when Michael Wilberforce.* He buried his face in his hands.

The door flew open and the little man came dashing in. Now he carried a half-bottle of whisky, from which two or three nips had been taken, and which he held out before him as a kind of feeler, while with closed, trembling lids he advanced across the floor.

"I had to," he breathlessly explained. "Had to show my appreciation. Of this rare privilege. It's all I've got. I only had a shot before asking you to shake hands. Dutch courage, eh? I'm funny. Take it," he implored, pressing it into the author's hands and trying to close his fingers round it. "Do me the favour. I want to think of you drinking my whisky. I shall tell them at the works I've stood an author a drink. Sounds silly, but it means much."

The author rose again and made as if to return the bottle, but the visitor put both hands behind him and backed away. "Don't thank me," he said imperiously. "Only too pleased, I'm sure. Wish it was full." The author stood there looking at him with the bottle in his hands, weariness and distraction all over his face.

"Of course, if it's not good enough," the visitor whined. "Of course, if I've taken a liberty."

Desperately trying to focus his mind, the author opened his mouth to speak.

"Barging in, when there was no call. Interrupting your work. Why should you bother with Tom, Dick and Harry? I apologize. Can I do more?" He stumbled away, calling over his shoulder in a voice full of tears, "I even thought you might be bucked."

The author put the whisky down somewhere. It was not a drink he cared for at the best of times, nor was he

familiar with this particular brand. On sitting down, he found that the sentence which had been mistily shaping itself in his head was gone. Birds were to have been huddling in trees like ruined choristers: beyond that he could not go. Now a real and awful misery came over him. The plain truth of it was that he was no damned good. The wretched little man would never have put Jane Austen off her stroke. Trollope would have risen above it. And how about Lucian Hornbill, seven years younger than himself and already on Television? Do pull yourself together, he whispered. Look: Cervantes was over fifty when he wrote *Don Quixote*. Mark Twain once came to the conclusion that he couldn't write for nuts. Tolstoy grew so weary of writing *Anna Karenina* that...

"But what's all that got to do with you?" he snarled. "Tolstoy, indeed. Very likely."

*It was the end of a grey winter afternoon and the birds were fuddled in their branches when Nigel Travers.*

The little fellow tore into the room. His face, which previously had been of a yellowish pallor, now was scarlet and his breast heaved like that of a man called on to endure some huge injustice: tears shone at the end of his quivering lashes.

"Give me that bottle!" he screamed, and, snatching it up, he rushed away. Outside on the landing he stopped short and the author could hear him panting like a blown retriever.

"The idea!" he shouted presently. "Coming it the author! And shaking hands like royalty!"

"Bet no one's ever heard of you!" he vociferated.

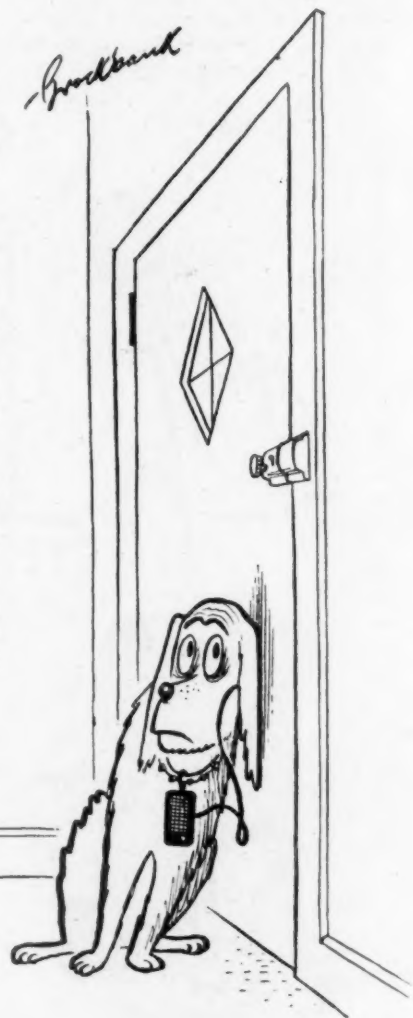
"My whisky's all right," he continued, now on a rather sobbing note. "My whisky'll do, if I won't. Take a man's All, and then despise him. Go

on. Toad! Jumped-up scribbler! Bogus intellectual!"

And with that at last he moved away, still bawling his objurgations, along the corridor and down the stairs, past the ferns in their pots to the hall—where, like everyone else, he tripped over the coconut matting—and so to the front door, with the slam of which there fell on the Shangrila a kind of peace.

"A new television quiz game, offering prizes up to £60, is to be introduced as a weekly feature of Midland independent programmes . . . Mr. Reg Watson, the producer, is looking for two Midland girl assistants (one blande the other brunette) . . ."—*Birmingham Mail*

Or both.



# Historic Moment

By NICOLAS BENTLEY

WE were sitting so that we faced each other across the table. He was a Cambridge man, name of Cedric Cudham, a minor don. He had a florid face and a hairy neck and his eyes were small and myopic. He was full of history and had that air of invincible superiority that is so often a sign of a second-class intellect. At forty odd he still retained some of the deliberate gaucheries of the undergraduate—there was a bright bandana handkerchief sticking out of the pocket of his dinner jacket—only now they had become the deliberate eccentricities of a conceited chump. He spoke quickly and authoritatively in a harsh voice that cut through conversation like a buzz-saw. He was every inch a don, of the crass, self-opinionated type, and with

each mouthful of the soufflé that he shovelled in (his table manners were none too good) I longed to kick his teeth in. He had a good strong set and I could imagine a heavy briar clamped between them as he sprawled in his airless rooms scribbling away at some erudite paper on the Council of Trent.

They had put him next to a healthy-looking girl called Myrtle, who in some strange way managed to give an impression of chic and yet remained unquestionably English. With what intention they had been paired off it was hard to say. Clearly he hadn't much interest in women of later date than Madame de Maintenon or with less political acumen than she must have had. Myrtle looked as though her political acumen began and ended with

the knowledge that Daddy always votes Conservative.

Having listened with a slightly dazed expression to a short lecture on Napoleon's strategy at Austerlitz, Myrtle deemed it the right moment to shove in her tiny oar.

"I thought Marlon Brando was awfully like in *Désirée*, didn't you?"

"Who is Marlon Brando?"

It was just a little too brusque. A lesser fool than Cedric would have seen how far calculated indifference towards a girl like Myrtle could be carried without giving her the needle. This time she felt it.

"Oh, Mr. Cudham, surely you *must* have heard of Marlon Brando?"

"Must I?"

"Oh, well, I mean—well, one must be rather an oyster in a cloister not to."

She knew exactly how to swing it and did so with a sweet reasonableness that took the blunt edge off but made the point a little sharper.

"He was absolutely Napoleon," she said. "I mean, he really was, really. Oh, he was wonderful!"

"You are alluding now to Napoleon?"

Myrtle—and I don't wonder—seemed rooted for the moment by this shaft of academic irony.

"Not to Napoleon. The only thing I know about him is that ludicrous hat."

"He did possess other attributes, of course," said Cedric, dry as ginger ale, though not as sparkling.

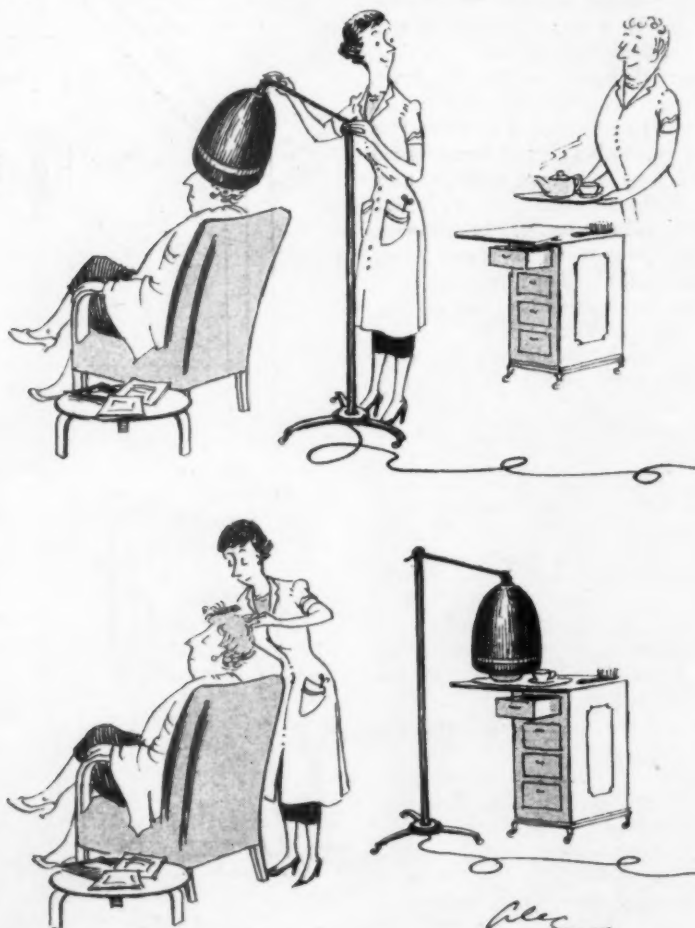
"Yes, but actually this film's all about his sex life."

"I'm afraid I don't often go to Hollywood films," Cedric said. His tone put Hollywood, and in fact the whole industry, exactly where it belonged—beyond the pale.

"Oh, do tell us, what do you go to?"

Myrtle, in spite of appearances, seemed to be nobody's fool, but she knew somebody else's when she saw one, and at twenty paces a blind man could have spotted Cedric as being Acton's or Macaulay's or in fact the dumb disciple of any historical sage who had been dead long enough not to offer competition.

"You adhere to the concept of perpetual motion, Miss Hesketh, like a good many of your generation, if I may say so."





Myrtle rolled a round and startled eye in my direction.

"But do say so. Or does that mean something I oughtn't to know about?"

"The desire for movement *per se*, or shall I say the desire for what they call in the United States 'going places,' doesn't necessarily exert an equal attraction upon succeeding generations. You 'go' to the cinema; I 'go'—at least, in so far as I may be said to 'go' anywhere—in pursuit of the University beagles."

He gave a broad, bland and rather fleeting smile to show (a) that as she wasn't worth more than a moment's consideration he bore her no rancour, and (b) that the subject was now closed.

"Is that fun?" The flat innocence of Myrtle's tone seemed to imply that of all sports none sounded more of a deadly bore than beagling.

"Indeed it is. And it is also a considerable test of stamina."

"You should come with me some time, Cudham," I said, "on the Monte Carlo rally. That's a pretty good test of stamina. You'd enjoy it."

He turned his tight-lipped smile on me and his little eyes glittered behind their heavy lenses.

"Would I? I doubt whether you would, though."

He was wrong there. I know what those ice-covered bends are like going over the Col du Fau. In a low-slung sports job like the one I drove in '52, and given a patch of mist, with him on the outside edge it would have been money for old rope.

"What's wrong with the cinema, though, Mr. Cudham?" Myrtle wasn't going to let him get away with it.

"What indeed?"

"Well, for my money," I said, "there's Hollywood."

Myrtle looked faintly disappointed.

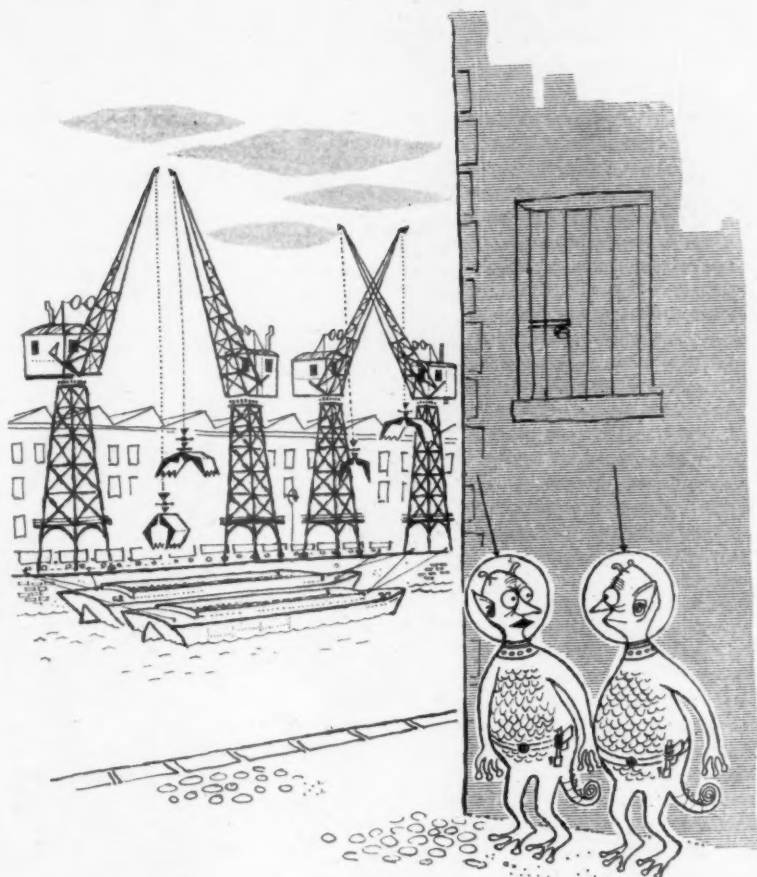
"I thought you were batting on my side," she said.

"Well, yes, but I'm against vesting authority in the lower apes."

"Our friend has put it in a nutshell," Cedric said, smug as a bishop. I didn't care for our being classed as friends, but I let it ride.

"Well, I don't care what you say," Myrtle said brightly, "I think *Désirée*'s a jolly good film and I adore Marlon Brando."

"*Chacun à son goût*," said Cedric with a hint of a shrug, just to show there



Smilley.

"I think they're eating."

was some Gallic blood as well as soda water in his veins, at the same time watching me to see whether I appreciated how delicate was his irony.

"Well, what's your taste like then, Mr. Cudham?"

"In what?"

"I mean in film stars."

"Well, I've told you, I seldom go—"

"Oh yes. But I bet I know exactly the type of woman who attracts you, Mr. Cudham."

He tried a deprecating snigger which didn't quite come off.

"Then I congratulate you on your percipience," he said.

We seemed to be swinging well outside his conversational orbit, which I've no doubt left the relationship of the sexes where it was when Herbert Spencer fell over it. But the man's

vanity was too strong for him; he stuck his neck out a little further.

"For example?"

"Oh well, someone like Marilyn Monroe probably," said Myrtle.

Cedric sniggered again. Then the prig in him, never very far from the surface, came to the top and leant over.

"I don't think Miss Monroe and I would have much to say to each other."

"That would be one time, Mr. Cudham," said Myrtle, "when what you would have to say wouldn't matter."

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News Chronicle

All right with the Yard?



*Cartwright and his Four-footed Friends*

# Minky

By OLIVIA MANNING

WHEN the time came for us to leave Mentone, we took with us a horse, a cat, a ferret and a bird. Fortunately Turbott Williams had returned to Marseilles and we were able to send the baboons back to him. As for the rest, we could not bring ourselves to part with Minky, Furet and the canary: no one would take Biffo. We dispatched him in a horse-box and, on our arrival, we were able to give him away to a riding-school.

Our chief problem was Minky. When she reached England, she would be liable to six months' quarantine. The English ladies who visited the Institute told us of cats and dogs who, separated from their owners for long periods, broke their hearts and died. Siamese cats, they said, were peculiarly liable to do this.

Cartwright was much disturbed. Only Miss Costello kept silence. When she was able to speak to Cartwright alone, she asked him to come with her to her villa. There she showed him a large rush shopping-basket with a double bottom. In this, she said, she had smuggled her blue Persian cats across the Channel a dozen times. Before setting out, she gave each of them a sleeping draught, then packed the upper compartment with bottles of brandy, scent and other dutiable goods.

"Declare the lot," she said. "Make a great thing of it. Insist that the Customs fellow examine everything. That will take his mind off the possibility of fraud."

Cartwright was horrified. He is an inveterate law-keeper. Not only is he law-abiding by nature, he is very nervous of the possible results of not being. "I could not do such a thing," he said.

"You must decide for yourself," said Miss Costello. "But either you break the law or you break Minky's heart."

During the ensuing week, Cartwright, reflecting on these appalling alternatives, suffered acutely. At last I said I would borrow Miss Costello's basket and myself smuggle Minky through the Customs.

Cartwright looked grey with apprehensions: "But supposing they catch you and send you to prison?"

"I'll write a book about it."

The only question that remained was whether I should give Minky one sleeping-tablet or two. Miss Costello recommended two, but I was afraid they might prove too much for her. Minky, unlike the blue Persians, was not a hardened drug-taker. I decided to give her one. In the Customs Shed, while a friendly official was helping me repack the basket, she awoke and raised a howl of indignation at her imprisonment.

"What is that?" asked the official.

"I'm afraid it's a cat."

"This will mean a very heavy fine," he said.

We visited Minky in quarantine whenever we could. She survived, and was due for discharge on the Thursday of Easter week. We had been invited into Hertfordshire for the week-end and the quarantine officials were willing to keep her until the following Tuesday. Cartwright would not hear of this. She had been incarcerated long enough. He would not let her suffer one day longer than was necessary. He arranged to collect her on Thursday morning and bring her with him to the country. On the same morning I took the train into Hertfordshire, expecting Cartwright to join the party that evening. He did not appear until Sunday afternoon.

It seems that, unwilling to spend even one mealtime alone, Cartwright had

arranged to meet a friend for luncheon in Soho between his return to London with Minky and his departure for the country on the afternoon train. He had forgotten the heart-rending cries that come from Minky whenever she is shut in her basket. Knowing his inability to control her, I had advised him not to let her out. In the train to London, undrugged and, as ever, indignant, she paused between one howl and another for no longer than was necessary to draw breath. Cartwright withstood the curiosity of his fellow passengers who asked one another if there was a baby shut in the basket. He withstood the humorous comments of the taxi-driver at Victoria and the interest aroused among other drivers whenever they were caught in traffic jams, then, in Old Compton Street, realizing that this noise would go on all through luncheon, he decided, despite much experience proving the contrary, that a few minutes' freedom might pacify her. He unstrapped the basket and let her out. He started to smooth her down with reassuring murmurs, but she had suffered too much to be reassured so easily. Struggling like a mad cat, she suddenly slipped through his hands, and leapt out of the window.

"Stop the cab," shouted Cartwright.

The cab stopped. As he descended and searched for money for the driver, he watched Minky bolt across the road into Dean Street. When he could, he



"Doing about four knots, I reckon."



*"Anyway, I've got over that awful feeling of being followed."*

pursued her. He caught a glimpse of her in the distance, travelling at great speed through the midday crowd on the pavement, then lost sight of her.

He shouted "Stop that cat," but no one could stop Minky. No one tried.

Cartwright was watched with considerable interest as he sped, a large, light-footed man, up the centre of Dean Street. He hoped he would find her paused by the traffic in Soho Square, but when he reached the Square there was no sign of her. She might, of course, have gone up any of the stairways that led from innumerable open doors.

He first searched the square garden, calling "Minky, Minky." He attracted a great deal of attention from the luncheon-time strollers, especially from foreigners who followed him, imagining, no doubt, that he was shouting a significant word which, if they heard it often enough, they would understand.

When no response came from Minky in the garden, he set about climbing likely-looking stairways. Several times his intrusion roused suspicion and his

explanation that he was looking for a cat seemed only to increase it. He went into shops, made inquiries among passers-by, offered rewards to small boys, spoke to policemen and gained permission to go round the corridors of the hospital.

At three o'clock, aware through his distraction that he had not eaten, he remembered his luncheon appointment. He went to the restaurant, then on the point of closing, and found his friend still sitting over a cup of coffee. Cartwright's excuse that he had lost a cat was often cited as one of the more preposterous he had ever advanced for the fact he can never arrive anywhere on time.

The restaurant would not serve him with a meal. He decided to get tea somewhere but forgot about it. When his friend returned to work, Cartwright returned to his search for Minky. His query "Have you seen a Siamese cat?" rang from Wardour Street to Charing Cross Road, from Old Compton Street to Oxford Street. When night fell he

could not bring himself to leave the district where she must be. He found himself a room in a small, dilapidated hotel. Having this address, he went round all the newspaper shops that remained open and put up advertisements offering a reward of £5 for Minky's safe return. His last move was to report his loss to the police station in Tottenham Court Road, then he went to bed. Past hunger, he had had nothing to eat but breakfast that day. His bed was hard and lop-sided. He slept badly, devoured by anxiety and fleas.

Next morning he set out on his search again. He put an advertisement into a number of small shops that had opened their side doors for an hour or two that Good Friday morning. He found a few Jewish shops that promised they would be open all day.

At noon, for the first time in twenty-four hours, he took food. He bought himself beer and sandwiches in a public-house where he was able to inquire if the barman had seen or heard of a Siamese cat. The barman had not.



When Cartwright told him to keep the change, he said he would ask among his customers during the week-end. Minky, though apparently seen by no one, was fast becoming the most famous cat in Soho.

Cartwright's life settled down into a routine of searching and re-searching the area into which she had disappeared. Sometimes he was followed by a train of small boys who, in the most ostentatious way possible, searched with him and yelled "Minky, Minky" when they were not discussing what they intended to buy with the reward. All sorts of cats were offered to him, none Siamese. By Saturday evening the boys began to show signs of discontent. Cartwright, they felt, was being unnecessarily particular in demanding a Siamese cat. What was there about this silly old Siamese that made it better than other cats, anyway? At this point, Cartwright felt it politic to hand round some token rewards, with the proviso that the boys must keep a look out for Minky on their way home.

At last, early on Sunday morning, Cartwright was awakened from the sleep of exhaustion by the hotel porter who brought him a note written in a large, round hand. If he would accompany the young lady who awaited him downstairs, his cat would be restored to him: Signed, Rebecca Levy. Cartwright threw on his clothes.

A small girl stood in the hall with her hands clasped behind her back. She watched him calmly as he sped downstairs, calling excitedly to her: "Where is Minky? Where did you find her?"

The girl smiled but did not answer. She beckoned him to follow her and led him to an early Georgian house off the square. A brass plate said it was the residence of Dr. Levy. She opened the front door and went upstairs.

"This way," she said.

Cartwright followed. On the landing she unlocked a door and stood aside.

"In here," she said.

Cartwright entered. In the middle of a double bed, underpinned with several cushions, a fur rug, an electric blanket and a hot-water bottle, surrounded by saucers of fish, meat and milk, was Minky. She gave a cry of anguished joy and leapt from the bed to Cartwright's shoulder.

The little girl watched their reunion with pleasure.

"Where did you find her?" Cartwright asked.

The girl told him that early on Thursday evening she had been sitting with a friend in the Soho Square garden shelter when she heard a slight cry. Looking up, she saw Minky crouching on one of the cross-beams inside the shelter roof. She had never seen a Siamese cat in Soho before. She had called and cajoled but nothing would persuade Minky to come down. At six o'clock she had to go home to supper and bed, but next morning she returned to the shelter and there was the cat, still sitting on the beam, gazing down, unseen by everyone but the little girl who knew she was there. Now Minky, bored with the whole escapade, began to cry piteously, making small sallies across the beam as though she longed to jump down and had not the courage to do so. The little girl realized that Minky must be lost. She returned home and persuaded her brother to come and rescue the cat. Just as the boy reached the point on the beam where Minky sat, Minky jumped lightly to the ground and sat there waiting for the children to pick her up. They took her home. They had decided to adopt her, but that evening, just before sunset, the boy, buying sweets in a Jewish shop in Greek Street, saw Cartwright's advertisement.

"But that was on Friday," said Cartwright. "Why didn't you let me know before this?"

The little girl looked down at her shoes and, after a pause, said: "You haven't forgotten the reward, have you?"

"No, I have it here." Cartwright took the notes from his pocket.

"You see," she explained, "I want to buy a Siamese cat for myself."

Cartwright handed her the reward: "You should get one for that—anyway, a small one."

She nodded seriously: "It's a small one I really want."

"And now tell me why you did not let me know you had Minky until this morning?"

She smiled as though the question were rather a ridiculous one: "Surely you know," she said, "we're not allowed to receive money on the Sabbath."

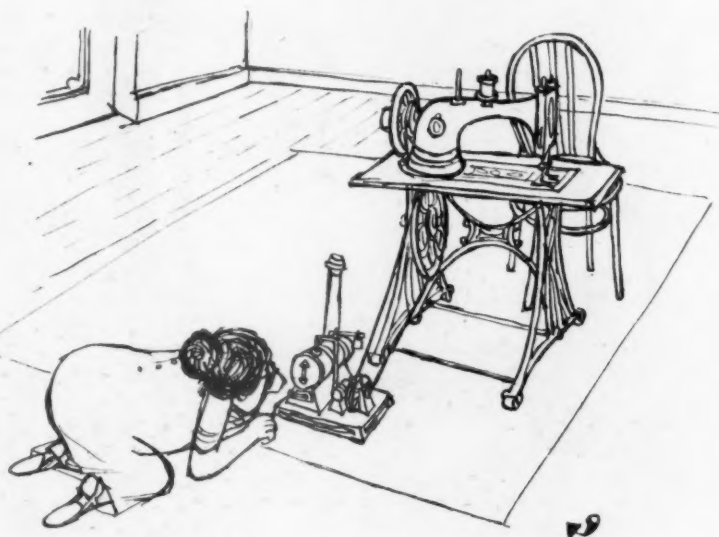
"When I went round to see my friend Sue, she was most upset about her brand-new husband, John. 'The doctor said he has a bad chill and must stay in bed,' she wailed. 'But he is so bad tempered and won't eat.'"

All invalids are inclined to be fretful and irritable about their food, I comforted her. Just ignore outbursts of bad temper, serve his food punctually and give him only small quantities . . . Unless the doctor has put him on a special diet, give him dishes made from body-building foods in their most easily digested forms, such as steamed fish, stewed or minced meat, scrambled or coddled eggs . . .

'You have taken a great weight off my mind,' Sue thanked me. 'Now can you help with another problem? . . .'

*News of the World*

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OF  
AUTHORITY







# I Led Two and a Half Lives

By WILLIAM THORNTON

I WAS leading two and a half lives long before Mr. Herbert Philbrick began drawing attention to himself, but it was only recently when the dramatized version of Philbrick's true-life adventures as average citizen, high-level member of the Communist Party, and counter-spy for the F.B.I. was shown on television that things began to get difficult. Up till then friends had always thought of me as just another assistant borough librarian, just another Britisher with a wife and two kids and a mortgage on the semi, just a guy with the usual hopes of winning the pools and the usual fears about alopecia and not

keeping up the payments, plus a compulsion-neurosis in connection with a photograph of an aunt of my wife's which used to stand on our piano until my wife read something about not having photographs on the piano.

We were popular in our suburb neighbourhood. Our lawn-mower was often out on loan to the Jacksons or to Miss Sweedle, and any night you might have seen me leaning over my gate in my shirt-sleeves chatting with passers-by about nuclear fall-out or something.

Then everything changed for me, and I found myself working for the local Conservative Party, an organization

which was pledged to the task of overthrowing the present set-up in our town hall and substituting the ruthless domination of men like Councillor J. Clackford-Bott for the easy-going democricket local government of Henry Grubb and his friends.

Working for the connies was deceptively pleasant, at first. It gave me a real kick to go down to the local and have a drink with men like W—, P—, C—, and K—, all of whom had met M—, who was himself personally acquainted with Clackford-Bott. But I never really kidded myself into thinking it could last or that this was the real purpose for which I had been persuaded to join the Party Association. Pretty soon the pressure began to be put on, and pretty soon I was being accosted in parking places by moustached men in drape-fitting club blazers, and three, five, or even nine books of raffle-tickets would be shoved into my hands. "The instructions're inside," the first guy would say, and you could see he hated my guts the way only the connies can hate a man's guts. "Get moving!" the other guy would sneer from under the mass of hair that lay along his upper lip. And then when I got home two other men would be shouldering their way past my wife and sitting down and saying nothing and leaving me an assignment to get a whist drive organized for the 23rd or else.

It was about this time I started working for the local anti-conservative association as well, and this too brought its problems. There was my old Dad, who'd been a staunch supporter of the Labour Party from his youth. I can see him now with his face shining and that far-away look he got in his eyes when the talk came round to politics. "They're all as bad as each other," he used to say, "but when you can find a stupider man than Grubb he can have my vote." But now he used to come and sit in our living-room, looking at these anonymous characters in their plus-fours and club blazers, and trying to look as if he believed me when I told him they were members of the new bowling club. And every so often he'd come out with a hot piece of news that I had to act on—such as the time when he told me the police had been tipped off by the connies that



"You look much nicer without glasses, Miss Delroy."

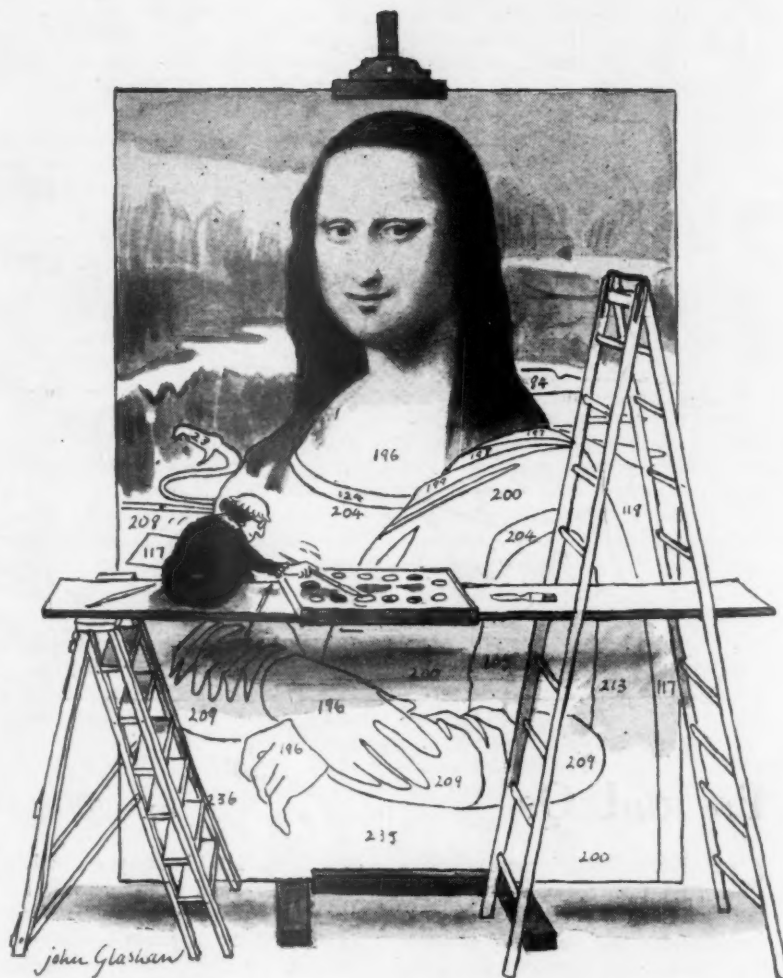
the gin which was being sold at the Busmen's Social Club had been watered and that the secretary was busy re-distilling it, and then I'd have to spend the morning at the zoo telling the conies and at the same time be figuring out how to substitute bottles of 70 per cent proof for the watered bottles the conies would be planting in the club in place of the re-distilled bottles of "Keir Hardie" the secretary would be thinking he was selling.

All this took it out of me, and unless you happened to catch me in a low angle shot or on one of the increasingly frequent occasions when my teeth were set and I was ventriloquizing my fundamental decency with my eyes focused on something in the middle distance, you might have thought I was trying to lead another life or two, modelling for the stomach-acid and nervous debility ads.

About this time we began to have trouble with the house. The word must've started to get around, and people must've begun noticing things. It was an afternoon in December and I was driving across town, and the net was closing in and the accents were getting even more confused. I'd just pulled up by the traffic-lights by Podmore Avenue and this guy comes across and pokes his head in at the window of my unconvertible. "Hey, bub," this guy says, "how come you have a living-room the size of a tennis court and ours is on'y eleven by twelve?" And I recognize this is Mr. Jackson who lives next door in the other semi of the det.

Next my wife started ducking in and out of wherever I happened to be. I'd never wished my wife to be mixed up in all this. I'd done all I could to keep it from her so she wouldn't know the sort of man she'd married, but maybe she too had begun to notice about the living-room and the extra storey I'd had to build on the house to accommodate these men in blazers who kept calling and also the books of tickets, etc. Whatever it was, she spent half her time practising a smile in her looking-glass and the other half jumping out on me and saying "I gotta talk to you, honey," and "Honey, I gotta talk to you."

I'd say "O.K., Blanche, some other time, honey," and I'd go off up the stairs to put the perforations in another gross of questionnaires about a forthcoming annual fête and gymkhana,



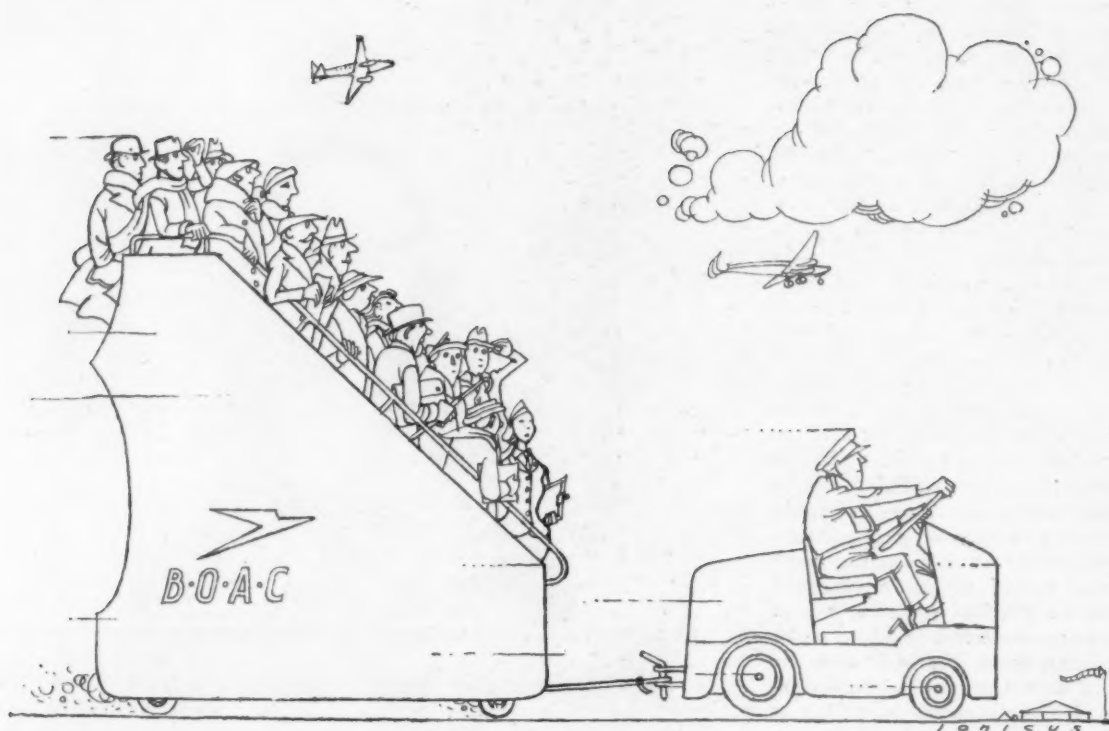
trying to fool myself that everything was still all right between us; but deep inside me I'd know that she was standing at the bottom of our gigantic staircase with a hurt expression on her face, thinking aloud about how something was wrong and how her name wasn't Blanche anyway, it was Violet.

I could sense things were coming to a crisis between us, and I'd already used up my penultimate exit line, "Well, being married to an assistant borough librarian is tough!"

When the moment came for the final showdown at the library I can't say I was sorry. It was even something of a relief. With my not having time to be there more than once or twice a fort-

night, the Chief Librarian had begun to wonder whether my heart was really in my job. He was a distinguished-looking man with a bald head and a large desk. "It's just I'm a little worried, son," he said, offering me a copy of a biography of Lloyd George. "This is the fourth time you've classified this volume amongst the birds and beasts in the practical do-it-yourself section. Maybe you need a vacation."

How I got out of the Librarian's office I shall never know, and what happened when the truth dawned on me that the Chief Librarian was an undercover agent for a resurgent Liberal Party will have to be told in a later gripping instalment.



## Ps and Qs

By LORD KINROSS

SHAKESPEARE, in more primitive times than these, wrote of the Seven Ages of Man. He cannot have foreseen that we should progress to an Ageless Age, when man may grow up without growing old, or even grow old without growing up. The nurseless infant, in his plastic cot with his planned vitamin schedule, no longer mewls or pukes. The crew-cut schoolboy, with his shining, neon-lit face, creeps like a snake all willingly to the milk bar. Extending far beyond the Poet's limited range is a book, published by the World's Work, in Surrey, entitled *Be Your Age* ("Out of the Awkward Age . . . Old Enough to Behave . . . Sixteen is not Sixty . . . Keeping Ahead of the Adolescents . . . The Dangerous Age" and so on) by Mrs. Marjorie Barstow Greenbie.

Shakespeare was blind to the subtler nuances of the Teenages of Man. What, with his mewling and puking and whining and shining, did he know of

Mrs. Greenbie's Sixteenager, "healthy, good-looking and well-groomed, and intending to remain so by very moderate patronage of the dinner-table and heavy patronage of the bath"; or of her Eighteenager, already able to walk and talk, and moreover "to the satisfaction of modern, standard social requirements?"

Respectively, in mental, if not perhaps yet wholly in social or occupational age, a "superior" and a "very superior" adult, they are well on their way towards an unShakespearian Utopia, where "all wives are as graceful, neat, and willing to please as tea-room or dance hostesses; where all mothers are as kind and sensible as Y.W.C.A. secretaries; where all sons and young men guests are as pleasant as the salesman; and all husbands and fathers as gracious as the department-store floor-walker."

It is all, of course, a matter of minding your I.Q.s and P.Q.s, and Mrs. G. minds the P. (for your Personality

Quotient) with a handy series of Social Age Tests. The first of her Seven Ages is from Sixteen upwards. "How attractive," you ask yourself at sixteen, "is my personality?"

Nothing to write home about	4
Not so bad	6
They say I'll do	8
I make a real impression	10

To pass, you must also be sure that the vitamin and mineral content of your diet is sufficient for maximum energy and well-being, that your sitting position is easy and attractive, that you do not pick at your person or make needless little noises with your mouth, that, on the contrary, you can pass a vocabulary test with it, and put into your voice "all that you would like the world to believe that you are."

Thus you rise to be a Seventeenager, no longer needing anyone to tell you to "take off part of that lipstick or not to wear those loud ties, shoes or socks," learning not to drink ("Those who are



permitted by their elders to have wine at social affairs, or to taste the cocktail just to see what it is like, or to drink beer with the family on occasion, may give themselves a score of eight" out of ten) and not to smoke ("If your smoking is only a social indulgence with others on occasion" you may give yourself six).

And so, as an Eighteenager, to Love.

#### FOR HIM

An evening alone with me is:	
A social danger	0
A dead loss	4
Not too painful	6
Worth dressing up for	8
Something she shouldn't miss	10

#### FOR HER

Demoralizing	0
A dead loss	4
As much as most men deserve	6
Good for his self-respect and manners	8
Romance and inspiration	10

No sighing like a furnace for this lover, but, "I really put myself out to be an interesting and delightful person" (2); no woeful ballads to the eyebrow, but "I act as if I considered any small token of regard or affection as a great privilege and not as my right" (3); he does not, moreover, reek of tobacco, is not afraid of deodorants, and does not try to break down a girl's proper resistance by persuading her to drink (2 each).

The mistress, for her part, the eyebrow subjected to her "high standard of personal grooming," gets 2 each if she does not deliberately work up his hopes or desires and then leave him cold, takes a genuine interest in his affairs even when he tells her the technical details of mechanics, and can enjoy his company even when he isn't making love to her.

Hence, avoiding "the pitfalls of senility in the later teens," to the Twenties and beyond to civilization, now fully endowed with a Liberal Education. Both He and She should by now have mastered five practical arts, two or more cultural resources, and two out-of-door sports. They attend, more or less regularly, political meetings, concerts, lectures and conferences, in their immediate environment (2); they know what the inside of the following looks like: a factory, a slum, a night club, a police court (2); they can write a clear, courteous, complete business letter, a newsy social letter, or a real love letter (2 each).

No bubble reputation is sought, but "an intelligent plan for the accumulation of reasonable property and the attainment of security"; no strange oaths are uttered, but "I can pronounce my own language, clearly, pleasantly, and without obvious provincial accent"; if there are no wise saws or modern instances, at least "I understand and practise without hesitation or embarrassment the ordinary rules of social etiquette" (2).

Whether lean and slippered or capon-lined, Mrs. Greenbie's man is eventually faced, like Shakespeare's, with the "personal and social hazards of middle life." There is, for example, "overweight, with the accompanying stiffening of the joints and reluctance to move; deterioration of appearance, especially of the skin, which is generally caused by poor diet or too much food plus some personal neglect; a general slowing up and dulling of the personality, and fading of the appearance due to insufficient or badly managed sexual life, affecting the activity of the glands and diminishing the whole psychic energy; a loss of beauty and personal and social effectiveness due to carelessness of grooming, failure to observe the changes of fashion, and general lack of social consciousness."

In short, the spectacles on nose and pouch on side, the useful hose a world

too wide for the shrunk shank, the big manly voice about to return, at any minute, to the childish treble, piping and whistling away.

But in the Ageless Age, the Greenbie Age, all this can be easily avoided. Abounding health may be maintained by

A yearly physical examination	2
A yearly dental examination	2
Diet as carefully planned as that for a young child	2
Rest and exercise ditto	2

In this up-to-date second childhood, man is quite in the mode because he likes styles, revises his hair-cut and general set-up every year, and turns himself out for home or business as though he was sweet and twenty going to a party. Popular young people cannot usually improve on the way he Dances, Climbs a mountain, Is helpful and amusing at picnics, Enthral a member of the opposite sex. He Never nags, Never frets, Seldom weeps, Meets strangers without strain or suspicion, Reads self-improvement literature of all sorts, Is interested in all questions of social and public welfare and culture and religion.

The end of the strange eventful history is thus no mere oblivion but P. at its Q-est, *cum* dentures, *cum* spectacles, *cum* hearing-aids, *cum* everything.



"I'd like you to meet my new secretary and hedge against inflation."

## A Peep Behind the Horse's Mouth

By ALEX ATKINSON



**D**UMLING: Well now. We are privileged to have in the studio to-night Sir Humphrey Clanker, who as you know flew back yesterday from Ludo. It was from Ludo, you will remember, that four British warships and a squadron of heavy bombers mysteriously disappeared last Thursday. Sir Humphrey, as you know, was the Government's official observer on the spot, and is perhaps best fitted to explain exactly what is going on in Ludo, and where the warships and bombers in fact are at the present moment. Here then now is Sir Humphrey Clanker, answering spontaneously questions put to him by Neville Brisk, Foreign and Economic Adviser to the — er — *West Rutland Weekly Visitor and Post*.

**BRISK** (*hastily stuffing his script inside his jacket and picking up an empty pipe in case of gestures*): Well now, Sir Humphrey. I think the question really that is uppermost in most people's minds this evening is this. Does this latest move mean that we can expect tension in Ludo? When I say tension, I mean of course *more* tension.

**SIR HUMPHREY** (*placing the tips of his fingers together*): Well of course, the situation in Ludo is not easy.

**BRISK**: I see, yes. What in your

opinion is the situation? I mean briefly, of course.

**SIR HUMPHREY**: Yes. (*Looking at the ceiling and stroking his tie*): Well of course, the situation is basically that you have the forces of unrest on the one hand, and Her Majesty's Government on the other. Then you have infiltration from the—the—

**BRISK**: Quite.

**SIR HUMPHREY**: And in the middle there is General Poh. The view of Her Majesty's Government has always been that the question of self-government—or at any rate something on the lines of what we might call Commonwealth status if other things were equal, having due regard to the result of last year's plebiscite and the principle of self-determination within the framework of existing treaties, not forgetting our obligations to NATO and bearing in mind the main provisions of the South-West Barian Pact, which is naturally of no small importance to the member countries in view of the growing significance of Smun as a tactical base, or at any rate as a bulwark against the growing forces of Communism in the area—which may or may not be a threat, that remains to be seen—er—should be a matter of negotiation.

**BRISK** (*keenly*): As, of course, was stated in the House last night.

**SIR HUMPHREY**: Exactly.

**BRISK**: I see.

**SIR HUMPHREY**: In the meantime, naturally, the curfew must be maintained.

**BRISK**: Yes. Now that brings me to the question of the missing warships. Four, wasn't it?

**SIR HUMPHREY**: A certain number of warships, which were stationed at Ludo, are now elsewhere.

**BRISK**: Search was made immediately, no doubt, in the area?

**SIR HUMPHREY**: The situation in Ludo is reviewed from time to time.

**BRISK**: I suppose a certain loss of life was inevitable?

**SIR HUMPHREY** (*intoning*): The morale of the civilian population on the island of Tana is high, and ample supplies of bedding and equipment are available.

**BRISK**: As, of course, you said in an interview with *The Times* this morning.



Eric Burgin

SIR HUMPHREY: Precisely.

BRISK: Thank you. Sir Humphrey, it has been suggested that Communist forces, working under cover of darkness, cut the anchor cables, towed the vessels to the mouth of the River Lo, set them adrift, and made their escape in the heavy bombers.

SIR HUMPHREY: Well of course, the principal exports of Ludo are jute, hardwood, tobacco and a little silver. Nothing much is known of the origin of the strange carvings which stand on the top of Mount Toba.

BRISK: It is thought by some, is it not, that the strange carvings which stand at the top of Mount Toba were transported there by slaves?

SIR HUMPHREY: Yes, it is.

BRISK: Now here, viewers, is an actual photograph of the upper slopes of Mount Toba. (*An excellent photograph of a range of hills is shown. After a full minute it fades out.*) Yes. Now, Sir Humphrey, during your talks with Mr. Kurana I believe he offered to give you back the warships in exchange for the oil concessions in the Boh area?

SIR HUMPHREY: Eh?

BRISK (*flustered*): Oh. Sorry. We crossed that bit out, didn't we? (*He takes out his script and fusses with it nervously outside the range of the camera.*) Er—let me see. . .

SIR HUMPHREY (*crossly*): The town of Bino is picturesquely situated some fourteen hundred feet above sea-level.

BRISK: Oh yes. Now, Sir Humphrey, what line do you think you will take in your forthcoming talks with Mr. Kurana?

SIR HUMPHREY (*glancing unobtrusively at a paper on his knee*): Her Majesty's Government are of the opinion that nothing but good can come from frank talks. The various problems which exist will be discussed on a broad basis, on the lines laid down during the 1955 talks with General Hu. It is expected that the two governments will state their separate viewpoints, as at the 1955 meeting. A joint communiqué would then be issued, setting them out in detail.

It is hoped in this way to take a further step forward along the road to world peace, economic security irrespective of colour, creed or political beliefs, an end to the Communist menace in the free markets of the world, an easing of tension, and the ultimate stamping out



of terrorism, nationalism, colonialism, looting, and the growing fear of inflation.

BRISK (*nodding*): As you in point of fact said in this evening's paper.

SIR HUMPHREY: Word for word.

BRISK: Yes, well, of course, that proves it. And of course viewers will have been pleased to have the opportunity of watching you actually saying it. After all, it is one of the wonders of television that a vast number of people are now able to find out for themselves whether the important political figures of the day are in fact able to make actual sounds issue from their mouths, or not. (*SIR HUMPHREY smiles deprecatingly.*)

Well now, Sir Humphrey, I see our time is up. It only remains for me to thank you for coming two hundred and eight miles—on this rather nasty night, if I may say so—to answer these spontaneous questions so frankly and so forthrightly. I'm sure viewers will have been glad to hear from your own lips the exact details of what became of those planes and warships—and to have had such a clear and up-to-the-minute explanation of the present situation in—er—

SIR HUMPHREY: Ludo.

BRISK: Yes. Good night, Sir Humphrey.

SIR HUMPHREY: Good night.

## Critical View

IT's after sitting through a panel programme—  
The TV critic's most depressing chore—  
That some of us make free with words like "moron,"  
"Pathetic," "utter boredom," "child of four" . . .

I've sometimes thought of asking the producer:

(a) If he thinks these people earn their fee,  
And (b) just how he picked them in the first place.  
Where did he look? And what was wrong with me?

W. ROGER NICHOLSON



# Fair, Fath and Forty

By PAUL DEHN

LIKE a shower of gold into my illiterate lap fall the exquisite opening cadences of the English publicity hand-out for Madame Jacques Fath's Spring Collection in Paris:

Two main imperatives of styling determine the evolution of the silhouette: a horizontal seam, set on the tips of the bosom thus permitting to curve the bust; a bell-shaped overfolding falling straight down with a slight fullness at the height of the hips. Moulding the high-set breasts, this line heightens the sham waistline and directs the movements of the skirt along a line which may be styling an influence originating from that of the "Restauration" without accentuating systematically the axis of the body.

Ever in the vanguard of male fashion and fortified by three cyclostyled pages of Mme. Fath's Restauration prose, I find myself at long last equipped with a technical vocabulary sufficient to tell you, after all these years of aching silence, about my own underwear.

## MY VEST

The *chalice bust* has rustic-woollen ultra-white sleeves, evocating the lily, and clasping the upper part of the arms in fluted elastic. The *tight thorax* is caressed by the fabric down to the *inlaid belt* which traces out the waist-line by means of a *horizontal cut-out* permitting to corset the abdomen. Further beneath, *full-bodied hips* give rise to the *bell-shaped overfolding*, tucked-in to a depth of 38 cm. below the circumference of—

## MY PANTS

A determination to sweetness and cheerfulness has presided to their choice. Light gracefulness announces the period of "Romantism" and is fascinating. Motioned at the back by *two inlays*, the sack-straight *split front-parts* fall down in one jet to the ankles under convexing hips at the sides. The tubular extremities (or *Nefertiti cylinders*) are tucked to a depth of 97 cm. inside the superior circumference of—

## MY SOCKS

These, in liver-brown, praise the glory of feet. Knitted exclusively (*chez Tante Hannah*) in savage woollens, they depend from rust-black suspenders and

loosely hasp the calves in *coiled folds* which gather to the intensity of *accordion-pleating* across the instep before *folding back* over manicured toes in a 9 cm. flap secured under nigger-laced *Strasbourg boots* by Teggins.

## DETAILS AND ACCESSORIES

Perfume: Bummaly's After-Shave.

Make-up: Bummaly's Neutral Talc.

Coiffure: Maison Bummaly, E. Finchley.

Linen-buttons, tapes and fastenings all in matching *cheese-white* demurely fading to *cowslip-yellow*. Various stitching by Mrs. Grocott.

## Holiday Brochure

TRY the romantic Antarctic

This fine geophysical year:

No accordion bands,

Or bubble-gum stands,

Or slot-machine halls on the pier.

Relax by the Cordell Hull Glacier,

Stretch out on the Shackleton Shelf,

Let the little ones play

Around Commonwealth Bay

—Or Discovery Inlet is smashing, they say—

And really enjoy yourself.

It's all but unknown, the Antarctic

(At the time of going to press);

But the word's going round,

It's bound to be found

In a summer or two, more or less.

Already explorers from Chile

Have met with a few Japanese,

While a party of Poles

Send p.c.s from Cape Knowles

Saying Russians and Swedes are basking in shoals

By the Franklin D. Roosevelt Seas.

On the beaches of Thorshammer Island,

Beyond the South Polar Plateau,

An Australian flag

Has been flown from a crag,

With an Argentine one just below.

There are U.S. contingents in Byrd Land,

With a mission of sorts from Berlin;

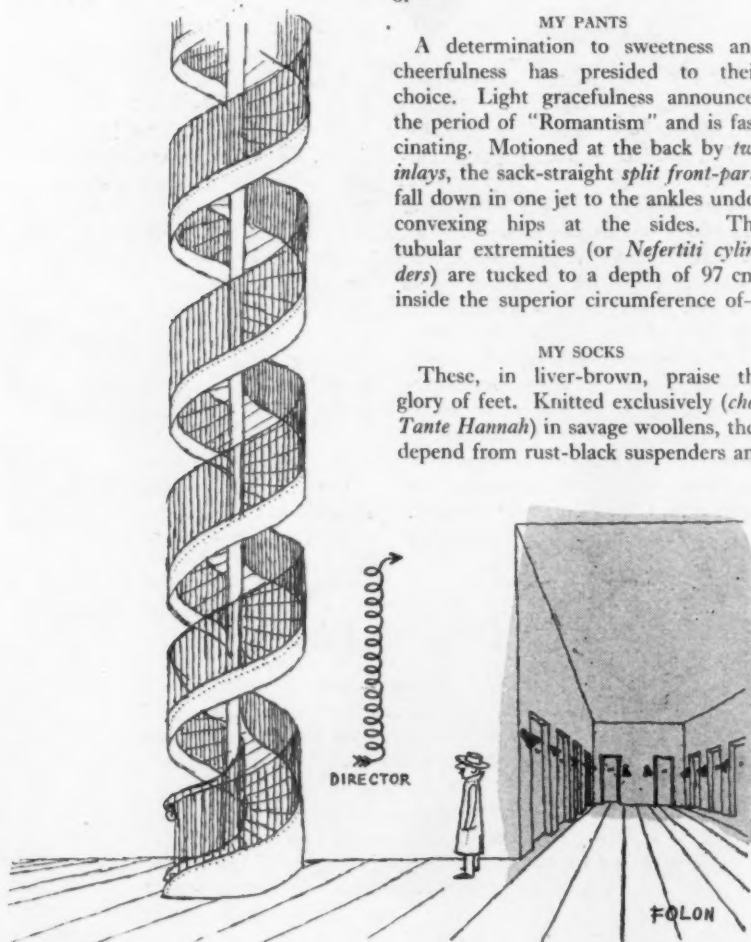
And although the U.K.,

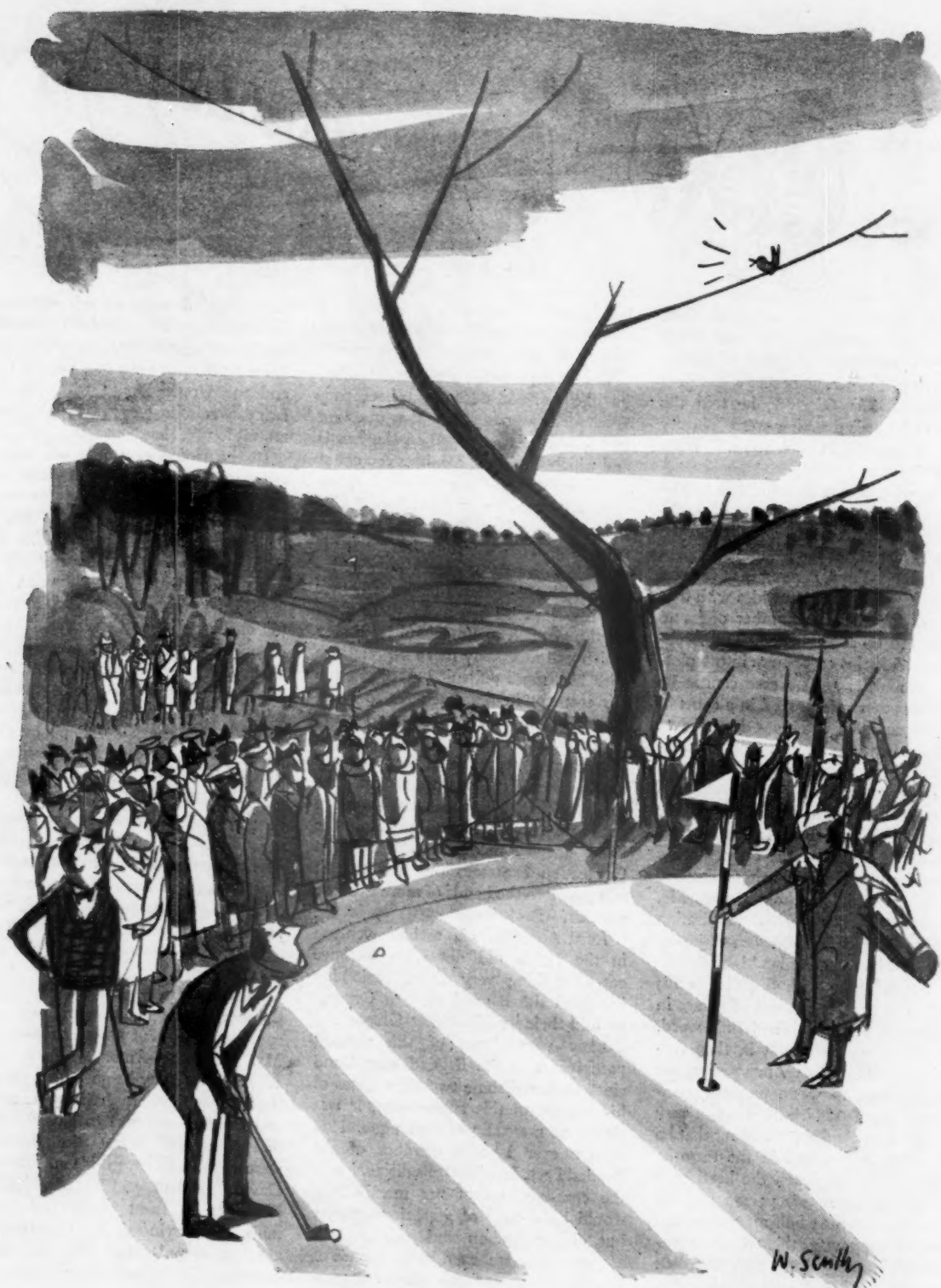
In her diffident way,

Has never declared her intention to stay,

Book now, before Butlin moves in.

J. B. BOOTHROYD







**T**HIS time the prize for the Dottiest Phrase of the Week surely went to Lord Mancroft. Referring to Mr. Koestler's hanging articles in *The Observer*, he told the House of Lords that they were "shortly to be integrated in book form." What fun politicians are!

But what about Archbishops? The Prime Minister did better about Archbishop Makarios than he had done the week before about the Middle East, and Mr. Lennox-Boyd, coming in at the end of the innings, laid about him with true vigour. There are a number of issues which can be disentangled. Did Archbishop Makarios co-operate in the plotting of murder? The case cannot be proved as cases are proved in a court of law, because the witnesses do not dare to show themselves and submit to cross-examination. That being so, what can the ordinary member of the public do but take Sir John Harding's word? Someone like Mr. Francis Noel-Baker, who has had exceptional opportunities to see for himself, is of course entitled to his own opinion, though since Mr. Noel-Baker expresses a high admiration for Sir John Harding, it is not very easy to see how he can combine high admiration for Sir John with disbelief in his word. But at least the rest of us are in no position to doubt Sir John's word. And, if we do not doubt it, then certainly, as Mr. Julian Amery says, we have no need to waste personal sympathy on the Archbishop. He is a very wicked man. And if it turns out that he was not only involved in the terrorist movement but so much the head of it that the seizure of his person and his papers disrupts the whole movement and terrorism dies away, then the Government will be most abundantly justified; for the first object of policy is to bring

killing to an end. But it will be an agreeable surprise if things turn out as favourably as that.

But the deportation of the Archbishop, justifiable or not, does not in itself provide any answer to the further question which Lord Attlee asked in the Lords and which the Prime Minister did not at all answer in the Commons—the question, Where do we go from here? Can there be any final settlement without conceding self-determination? Is it possible to get peace except by a settlement with the nation's leader, whether we like him or not? Is there then anything much to be gained by a step which will inevitably make negotiations with him more difficult? Will not the Government in the end have to bring him back as the French had to bring back the Sultan to Morocco, and when they bring him back will they not lose much face? The Government expresses the hope that, with the Archbishop out of the way, leadership will pass into the hands of more moderate persons. The Opposition expresses the fear that it will pass into the hands of more extreme persons. We shall see.

Lord Attlee in his maiden venture in the Lords did not seem to have got everything very clear. Switching from the Bagdad Pact to Cyprus, he told their lordships that Greece and Turkey were "two of the greatest participants in the Bagdad Pact," and since he based some twenty minutes of his speech on this supposition, it was clearly no mere slip of the tongue. Had Greece ever been a member of the Bagdad Pact, Lord Attlee's discussion of the consequences of her membership would have been of great importance, but, alas, as Bishop Butler said, things are what they are, even in the House of Lords. They are what they are even

when—as happened on this occasion—their lordships are too polite to interrupt and point out that they aren't. As it was, Lord Attlee put both feet right into it, and the Upper House with exquisite courtesy refrained from telling its latest recruit to take them out again.

In the House of Lords one can get away with anything—or at least lords temporal can. It is not quite so easy if you are a bishop. The Bishop of Chichester fairly got every noble goat that there was in the place. Not a single voice was raised in his favour, and indeed the ground upon which he chose to challenge the Government—the ground that Archbishop Makarios had a personal grievance for his treatment—was ground that was almost uniquely untenable. One had the rare sight of seeing politicians shocked all over the place. A great deal more impressive was the speech of the Archbishop of Canterbury which utterly dominated the debate, and their lordships spent a chastened and profitable afternoon alternately explaining to one another how benighted were foreigners who allowed clergymen to interfere in politics and crawling on all fours round and round the boots of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

At the Day of Judgment there are few Cabinet Ministers, past, present or to come, who will cut a better figure than Mr. Heathcoat-Amory. With what admirable honesty he gave his report on the price review, emphasising its merits and making no effort to gloss over its disappointments. But the Socialists were not inclined to listen. As Mr. David Marshall said to Mr. Herbert Morrison in front of the Singapore mob: "I'm trying to tell them that you are our friends, but who the hell's listening?" CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS





## BOOKING OFFICE

### Hugoism

Victor Hugo. André Maurois. *Cape*, 30/-

VICTOR HUGO (1802-1885) is one of the monsters of literature; and, speaking for myself, I have no desire ever to re-open *Les Misérables* or sit through another performance of *Ruy Blas*. Where poetry is concerned one must accept the judgment of the race to whom the poet belongs. French opinion overwhelmingly hails Hugo as a great—perhaps the greatest—French poet. It is said that without him poets like Baudelaire and Mallarmé would lack half the basis of their technique. That may be so. As a novelist he is stiff, humourless and improbable to a degree; as a playwright, as far away from Shakespeare as you can get.

There is, of course, nothing original in saying that Hugo was often a bore. Whatever we may feel about him in that respect is slight compared with the sufferings he inflicted on his gifted contemporaries. Stendhal, Flaubert, Baudelaire, Amiel, Huysmans, Anatole France, all had their moments of agony at the awful banality of his wooden psychology and self-important moralizing. True, they had to acknowledge his gifts as well. To some people life presents itself as a web of infinite subtlety; to others a picture daubed in the crudest colours. A case can be made for either view, or indeed for a combination of both. Hugo belonged decidedly to the school of crude colour.

It has to be admitted that Hugo's own life was full of the most extraordinary incidents that might be held to excuse a taste for the melodramatic. His father was a Napoleonic general who came near turning himself, and his family, into Spanish nobles. If the Bonapartist régime had survived this might well have happened to the Hugos. The writer's parents were far from happy together. Victor's great gifts were apparent at an early age, and the brother nearest to him seemed almost equally talented. The two of them fell in love with the same girl. Victor married her; his brother went raving mad at the wedding and spent the rest of his life in an asylum.

By the time he was twenty-five Hugo was a famous figure in the French literary world. He had political ambitions and became a Peer of France under Louis-Philippe. From a Royalist beginning, he moved steadily towards the Left. At first he was a supporter of the Prince-President, but they soon quarrelled and, during the Second Empire, Hugo lived in exile in the Channel Islands, where his inability to comport himself in a manner appropriate to a refugee made him little liked in the neighbourhood.



By this time his stature in France was immense. His political capabilities strike one as inadequate to the point of being ludicrous; but he possessed physical courage and a strength of personality that carried him almost to the top. He remained, however, always the literary man. It is impossible to trace in him the smallest atom of statesmanship. His political ideals were the romantic political ideals of the literary man; his methods of attempting to achieve them, wholly literary in their conception. But as a literary man he had probably the greatest public—and, in a sense, political—success in history. It was rather as if Dickens, Tennyson, Hardy, Kipling and Galsworthy were all rolled into one at the period of their greatest public popularity and held the stage for sixty years.

With all this most complicated material M. André Maurois (admirably translated by Mr. Gerard Hopkins) deals with great skill. M. Maurois is absolutely determined that as a writer Hugo must be presented in the highest class. In France it is no doubt true that the characters of Hugo's novels are household words; in this country, not so. For twenty people to whom Emma Bovary or Swann are living persons, scarcely one would be likely to say, by way of verbal illustration, that such-and-such a person was like a given character from *Les Misérables*. At times M. Maurois becomes almost irritable with Hugo for making sustained praise so difficult to a biographer, himself of such very different character and personality.

Many will find the greatest interest of the book in Hugo's personal life, which was also lived on a Gargantuan scale. Starting off with a primness that would have done credit to the most strait-laced of Victorian married men (he admonished his fiancée for showing too much ankle when walking over mud) he became in due course a figure from whom no member of the opposite sex was safe. The involutions of his more permanent emotional life would have sent any ordinary man off his head. It is necessary to be broadminded where figures of Hugo's vitality and egotism are concerned; but even so it is impossible not to feel that a lot of his adventures were unnecessarily sordid. M. Maurois tells all that side well, too—including Madame Hugo's affair with Sainte-Beuve—and it all makes very interesting reading.

ANTHONY POWELL

### Between Friends

**My Dear Duchess.** Edited by A. L. Kennedy. *John Murray*, 21/-

Lord Clarendon, whose letters to Louise Duchess of Manchester form the bulk of this book, was a delightful character and (as he thought she burnt his letters) an uninhibited letterwriter. This correspondence covers the years 1858-69, during which time he was twice Foreign Secretary, and it appears that the visits of unpopular V.I.P.s were already a problem in the nineteenth century. The book includes also some letters from Lord

Granville, who wrote more flirtatiously, though less facetiously, than Lord Clarendon. They were friends, but not above making catty remarks about each other to the beautiful Duchess. It is however from Lord Clarendon that we learn of Maréchal Pélissier being persuaded not to face his wedding night with his head enveloped in a white foulard with two enormous bows, and of the recurrently scandalous behaviour of Thomas Earl of Wilton. The latter was remembered until recently in Leicestershire as The Wicked Lord Wilton, and Lord Clarendon often called him simply "The Wicked." He had his exploits celebrated in a poem called *The Tomiacad*, which among other incidents described him as taking the Garter to a foreign sovereign and wearing it on the way.

Captain A. L. Kennedy's index is somewhat inadequate and in his notes he confuses Maria Lady Ailesbury with Frances Lady Waldegrave, and Sarah Lady Jersey with Julia Lady Jersey.

V. G. P.

### Looking for Love in a Great City.

Daniel Trevoise. *Cape*, 15/-

In a first novel by no means free from youthful absurdities but displaying, also, signs of abundant promise, Mr. Trevoise analyzes a group of characters engaged in the quest epitomized by his title. The cast—domiciled mostly at Tooting—includes a bearded, discus-throwing musician, in thrall to a sterilized Polish siren (who longs secretly for motherhood); his less sophisticated brother, demobbed from the army, who says "Tis" and "Twas," but is also addicted to superannuated wisecracks such as "His intentions are strictly dishonourable"; a raddled writer of stories for women's magazines and her disillusioned daughter (believed erroneously to wear "uplifts"); a philosophical brewer ("Golf, the

greatest religion of all"); and a couple of awful but pathetic orphans, haunted by the ghost of their suicidal mother, which finally disintegrates after scaring the children from home.

The author shows a neat gift for parody (notably of Horror Comics and pseudo-transatlantic thrillers), but he is inclined to treat sex too sententiously: frequent passages ("passion locked them together to identify and unite and finally submerge their discontent") recall his own burlesques of popular-fiction styles.

J. M-R.

### God Protect Me From My Friends.

Gavin Maxwell. *Longmans*, 18/-

In this book Mr. Maxwell has attempted a full-length and detailed biography of Salvatore Giuliano, the peasant-boy who became "king of the bandits" and a major force in post-war Sicilian politics. The author's task was a formidable one, for the story of Giuliano has become overlaid by a vast and ramifying superstructure of legend; with infinite patience Mr. Maxwell has set out to disentangle the facts from the fiction, and if he has not wholly succeeded it is from no lack of enterprise or pertinacity. He has examined innumerable documents not hitherto made public; he has lived at Montelepre, his hero's native village, and become intimate with his surviving friends and relations; yet much in Giuliano's career remains tantalizingly equivocal, and his mysterious death in 1950 has yet to be satisfactorily explained. Handsome, chivalrous and rather vain, his tragedy was one of *hubris*, and it is hardly surprising that in Sicily, where the pattern of life remains largely archaic, he should have become a mythical cult-hero. Mr. Maxwell's account of him is intelligent, sympathetic and, in parts, strangely moving.

J. B.

### William III. David Ogg. (Brief Lives.) Collins, 8/6

This little masterpiece is an essay in partial rehabilitation of the Whig view of William. After a generation in which seventeenth-century history has been written by Tories, Mr. Ogg re-examines Macaulay's hero, and though he does not find him particularly attractive he explains what he considers to be the improvements in the English polity during his reign and how far they were due to William. He sees him as the patient, indispensable leader of an anti-totalitarian alliance and as an absolutist who curbed his instincts in order to make partnership with Parliament possible.

The book is so full of odd pieces of information and ingenious ideas that there is a sacrifice, a very justifiable sacrifice, of portraiture and narrative to analysis. The style is compact and felicitous, as in the description of Charles II as a "facetious fascist." The range of subject-matter is unusually wide; it includes a very important discussion of the development of humanity in the law, which, from the point of view of the average citizen, was at least as important a consequence of the Revolution as the National Debt.

R. G. G. P.



### AT THE PLAY

*Troilus and Cressida*  
(MARLOWE SOCIETY, CAMBRIDGE)  
*One Bright Day* (APOLLO)

*The Good Soldier Schweik* (DUKE OF YORK'S)  
*Romeo and Juliet* (SLOANE SCHOOL)

"HEAVEN bless thee from a tutor, and discipline come not near thee!" This line, and the one about Aristotle, has always warmed undergraduates to *Troilus and Cressida*, though the recent production by the Marlowe Society at Cambridge needed no such local filip. The cloak-and-dagger anonymity of the Society was on this occasion particularly unselfish, for the evening proved remarkable not only for the quality of its acting but also for the excitement, often missing from professional excursions, which it gave to the political tensions between Greece and Troy. Both the *Troilus* and the *Cressida* (the latter played by an undergradiette) had a genuine depth; the squabbling brass-hats were vivid personalities, in excellent contrast; there was a Thersites of fascinating viciousness, and—most notable of all—a Pandarus so richly slippery that but for the assurance that the entire cast were junior members of the university one would have guessed him to be an unusually ripe old don. Whoever the producer (also an undergraduate), he knows better than some of his London colleagues how to make actors speak verse.

*One Bright Day*, by SIGMUND MILLER, in fact describes four decidedly overcast



[*Troilus and Cressida*]

days in the life of an American pill company. This pill, a household remedy, is discovered to be toxic, having killed a small boy (why no more, one asks?); and for a board of guinea-pig directors, summoned from their well-lined hutches, the discovery raises an acute moral problem. The president, played with dry vehemence by CLIVE BROOK, is almost a dictator; the chief executive is less honest, and in love with the president's daughter. Out of all this come some quite dramatic scenes, such as the bullying of the boy's father into an admission of negligence, and the critical board-meeting where the president gambles on a vote of confidence; but the characters are uninteresting, the play remains staid and its dependence on the telephone becomes prodigal, while the production places English accents in an aggressively American setting. Mr. BROOK has the lion's part, in a double sense, for he prowls continually. DEREK FARR fills out the ambitious executive persuasively, RENEE ASHERSON makes the erring daughter a girl of character, and against the general solemnity one is increasingly grateful for the cheerful cynicism of NAUNTON WAYNE as a frankly dissolute guinea-pig.

Theatre Workshop brings to the West End EWAN MACCOLL's adaptation of *The Good Soldier Schweik*, as well as its strange little discourtesy of omitting the National Anthem. The production is episodic, and far too slow. Much of the original satire on army life is lost by making Schweik an intelligent spiv instead of a baffled simpleton, yet MAXWELL SHAW, who plays him, is a gifted droll of the school of Harpo Marx, and there are several other good comic performances, and some very funny moments.

Shakespeare at the Sloane School, Chelsea, is something to which one has learned to look forward. Even for boys taught to speak and act as GUY BOAS teaches them, *Romeo and Juliet* proves thorny. A surprising degree of feeling comes through this year's production, though its pace could be quicker.

ERIC KEOWN



## AT THE GALLERY

*Sir Alfred Munnings at the Royal Academy Diploma Gallery*

(Closes 30 June)

ANYONE who has ever attempted to paint a horse must, if he is honest, admire the extraordinary dash and aplomb which Sir Alfred Munnings brings to the accomplishment of this most difficult feat of representation. Alone, in the last decades, the late Sir William Orpen showed an equal degree of that swaggering dexterity which approaches sleight of hand but is not, in the long run, by any means the most satisfying quality to be found in a picture. Orpen, who seems linked by

temperament to Munnings, played the same difficult game with his usually opulent sitters as Munnings does with his horses and their masters. No lighting effects, or conglomerations of elements and materials, or grouping of figures, however complicated, appear to baffle either of them for long. Everything is solved with gusto, up to a point.

The critical faculties of painters related to their contemporaries are often warped. Such great and meritorious figures as Ingres and Delacroix were notoriously at loggerheads, and certain impressionists and post-impressionists by no means saw eye to eye with each other. But when Sir Alfred inveighs against Picasso, he is, I think, throwing light on his own most formidable weakness, which, sadly, denies him the right of being considered as a really great modern painter. That lies in a lack of both fastidiousness and invention in the shapes and arrangements of his colours, irrespective of what they represent. This fault is too fundamental to be compensated for by his qualities of surface sparkle and dexterity. Design is a very strong point with such 'moderns as Braque, Matisse and Dufy, as well as Picasso, though some of their followers, perhaps De Stael, or our own Ivon Hitchens, may err at times in having too little contact with life and too little representation of it. Sir Alfred comes nearest to a happy state of fusion between representation and design in his small and least highly realized studies of horses and jockeys against simple backgrounds of sky and turf.

ADRIAN DAINTREY



## AT THE PICTURES

*Jubal—One Man Mutiny*

FROM this week's six I pick *Jubal* (Director: DELMER DAVES) to mention first—partly because four of the others have already been referred to in drawings in these pages, partly because they're an average lot, no single one is specially outstanding, and one must begin somewhere.

*Jubal* is a big, spectacular (CinemaScope) Western, with GLENN FORD as that type-hero of the modern Western, the stranger who drifts into a community, stirs it up, and at last leaves with the heroine. The heroine, incidentally—always a pretty dim figure in a Western—is in this instance even dimmer than usual: she gives the impression of having been singled out from the background figures because a heroine was needed and the principal female character in the story, though decorative (VALERIE FRENCH) and amorous in the extreme, disqualifies herself for the job almost as soon as she appears by trying, when already the wife of his boss, to seduce the hero.

The strength of this one is partly visual (magnificent Montana scenery), partly in the interest of the detail. One does get a real idea of the life of men on a ten-thousand-acre ranch, and of the work they have to do: interest is constantly



(Jubal)

Shep Horgan—ERNEST BORGNINE

freshened by a glimpse of some such occupational hazard as hunting for a mountain lion, or of the way a group of range riders camp in the open and play cards by moonlight. The ending is hasty and forced: when the time comes for it, we are simply assured that the erring wife whose malicious lies had sent a posse off to lynch the hero, suddenly, on the point of death, retracted them, thus putting everything right. But that is merely to send the simple-minded customers away happy; till that, there is much to enjoy, including a crackling performance by ROD STEIGER as a very nasty villain.

ROD STEIGER appears also as what the simple-minded customers will take to be a villain in *One Man Mutiny* (Director: OTTO PREMINGER), where he is very good in a quite different way as the subtly efficient Army prosecutor at the court-martial of Colonel Billy Mitchell in 1925. GARY COOPER appears as this latter historical personage, whom the film is concerned to present—with perfect truth, it seems—as a dedicated character who foresaw in startlingly accurate detail the importance of air power, could not get anyone to believe him, and deliberately contrived his own court-martial so that his ideas should be published. Much of the film is devoted to this court-martial and uses the authentic words spoken at it; and the old rule about the dramatic power of a trial scene is proved once more. The first three-quarters of an hour of the picture, preparing the way for it, cannot compete in interest—though this includes nearly all the scenes for which it was worth using the CinemaScope screen. (It also includes one shot that uses the CinemaScope screen for an extensive view of a thumb pressing a bell-push.)

Conditions don't permit of a "survey"



of the usual kind this week, but there are two releases to mention: *DANNY KAYE* in *The Court Jester* (reviewed here 22/2/56), and *Quentin Durward*, which is remarkably entertaining in an unexpected way—one is tempted to believe that some passages of it are quite deliberate burlesque.

RICHARD MALLETT



## ON THE AIR

### I Loathe Lucy

**A**N American sheet called *Television Digest* has decided that the writer of this column while "trying assiduously to be fair" is "veddy, veddy uppity British in his condescension towards both N.B.C. and I.T.A." Some concern has been caused apparently by the cool reception I have afforded American TV exports to Britain and by a statement of opinion that £1,500,000 a year seems a fancy price to pay for a weekly romp with "Dragnet," "Gun Law," "Inner Sanctum," "I Love Lucy" (all I.T.A.), "I Married Joan" and "The Burns and Allen Show" (B.B.C.).

What I find astounding is the accompanying comment by the digest that "just about every appraisal of British TV since the commercial programs started last September . . . bears out our observations that the British audience likes what the Americans do." Now it is quite true that television criticism in Britain has tended to avoid deep scrutiny of these American imports (critics have quite enough domestic corn on their plates), but to mistake silence for approval is altogether too optimistic. The truth is that these American TV filmlets are too repetitious to call for regular evaluation. You see one instalment and you have seen the lot. In "Dragnet" every telephone conversation, every look and every gesture is predictable. The formula is unvarying and doggedly monotonous.



I Love Lucy

Lucy—LUCILLE BALL Ricky—DESI ARNAZ

In "The Burns and Allen Show" the comedy is as standardized and routine as the Changing of the Guard. These dollops of crime and domestic farce advertise the American genius for mass production. They roll off the assembly lines with every thrill and giggle in place: they are precision jobs of inflexible and unrelenting conformity.

I do not deny that their initial impact on the market is successful. British viewers find them slick, glossy and neat. Compared with pedestrian home-made programmes they at first seem wonderfully brisk and sophisticated. Possibly they appeal because they are unmistakably the relations of the glamour family of Hollywood—poor relations, no doubt, but exhibiting the same features, bone-structure and swagger. And then the interesting visitors take up residence in the spare room and outstay their welcome. Their slickness and glossiness become as nauseating as heady perfume at the breakfast table. They become a terrible bore.

Channel 9's "This Week" is making such rapid progress that it may soon be running "Panorama" close as the best magazine programme on the air. It

covers much the same ground as the B.B.C.'s star chamber—well-documented peeps into social problems of the moment, interviews with visiting celebrities and occasional forays into the arts—but at present it lacks the incisiveness, the purpose and polish of Michael Peacock's production. "Panorama" is deservedly popular. It mixes middlebrow interests and entertainment very effectively with a reasonably cerebral ration of basic information and controversy, and employs talented impresarios to conduct its proceedings. Its weakness is its unreliable quality. It makes far too many blunders, features items (weird theatrical excerpts and so on) that have no place whatever in this window on the world, and is sometimes afflicted by an insufferable smugness. "This Week" could do better. Given adequate resources I am quite sure that Caryl Doncaster could convert this programme into essential viewing and give the I.T.A. a much-needed leg-up.

The Home Service programme "Something to Say" seems to me a most unworthy substitute for the traditional "improving" talks of Sunday evening. Instead of one person speaking with authority and care on a subject of some significance we now have four celebrities chattering aimlessly about matters of flippant gossip. The idea, I gather, is for one member of the quartet to make a brief and usually outrageous statement of personal opinion and then to work up some kind of synthetic argument about its validity. The standard is that of a university debating society and the value of the programme is negligible. But perhaps the worst feature of "Something to Say" is the fact that some speakers are allowed to ingratiate themselves with certain sections of the public and the market for their wares.

I suppose we have TV to thank for this sad declension.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



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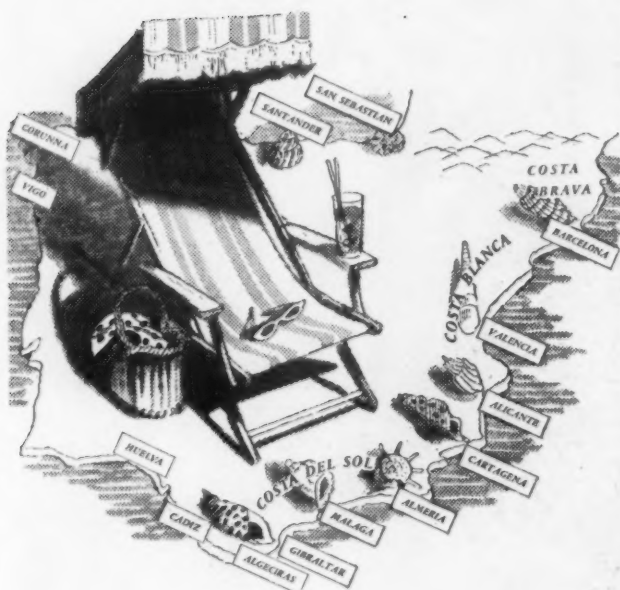
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Written by Stephen Potter; designed by George Kim

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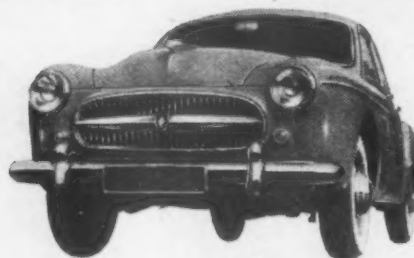
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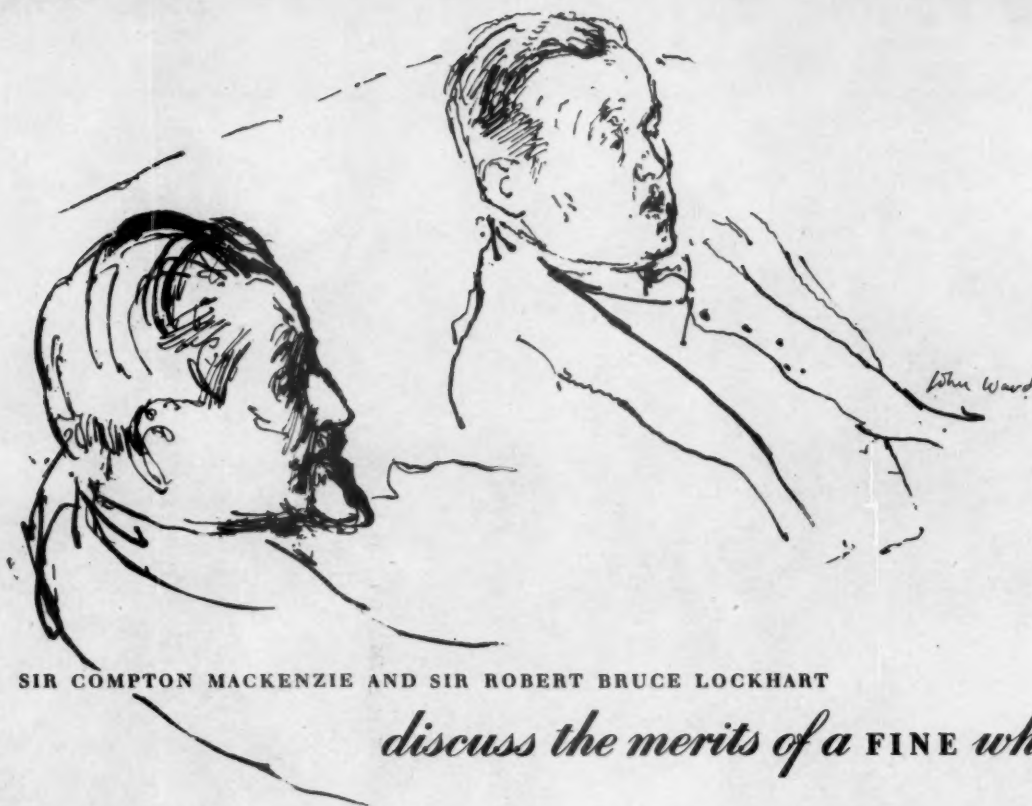
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\*This conversation between Sir Compton Mackenzie and Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart was recorded at Sir Compton's Edinburgh home

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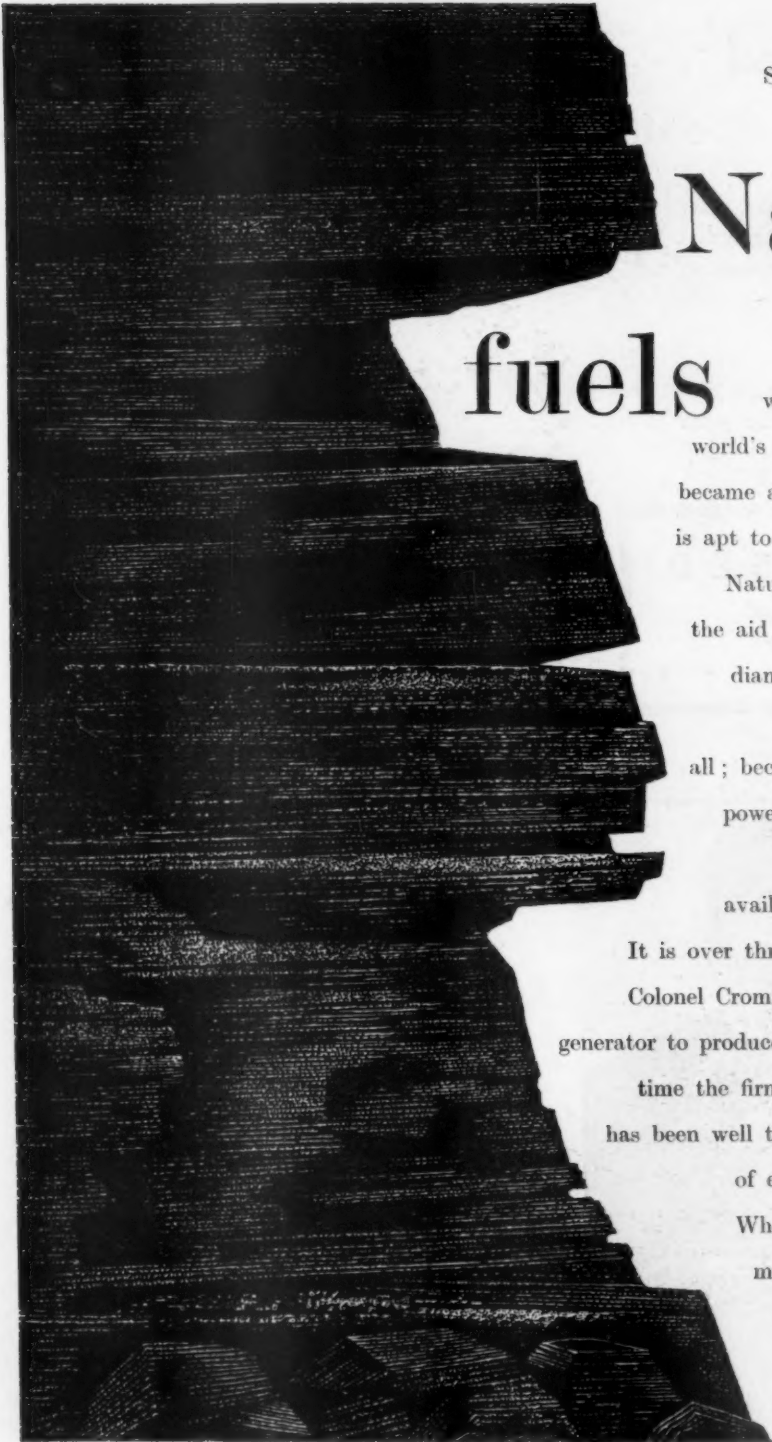
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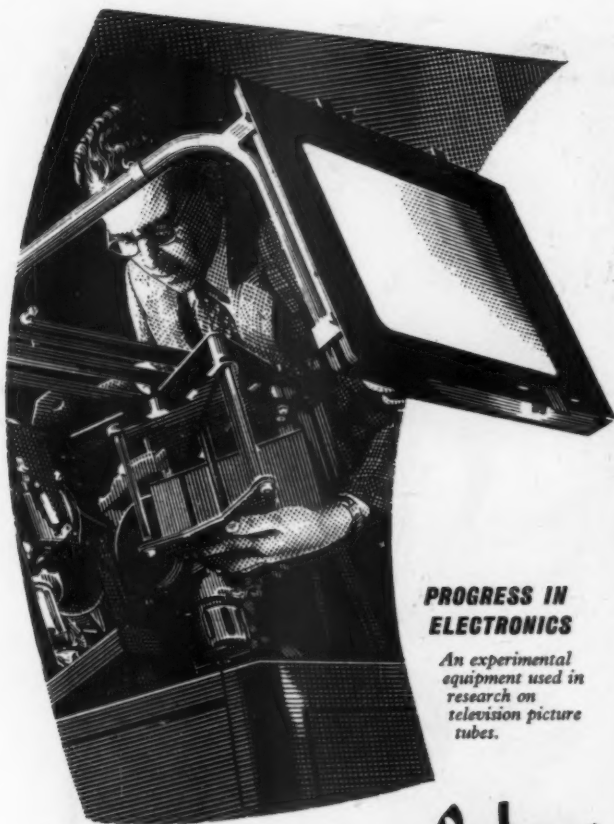
**POSITIVELY RUSTPROOFED METAL WINDOWS**

*Write to Crittalls for a helpful booklet on Metal Windows*



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### PROGRESS IN ELECTRONICS

*An experimental equipment used in research on television picture tubes.*

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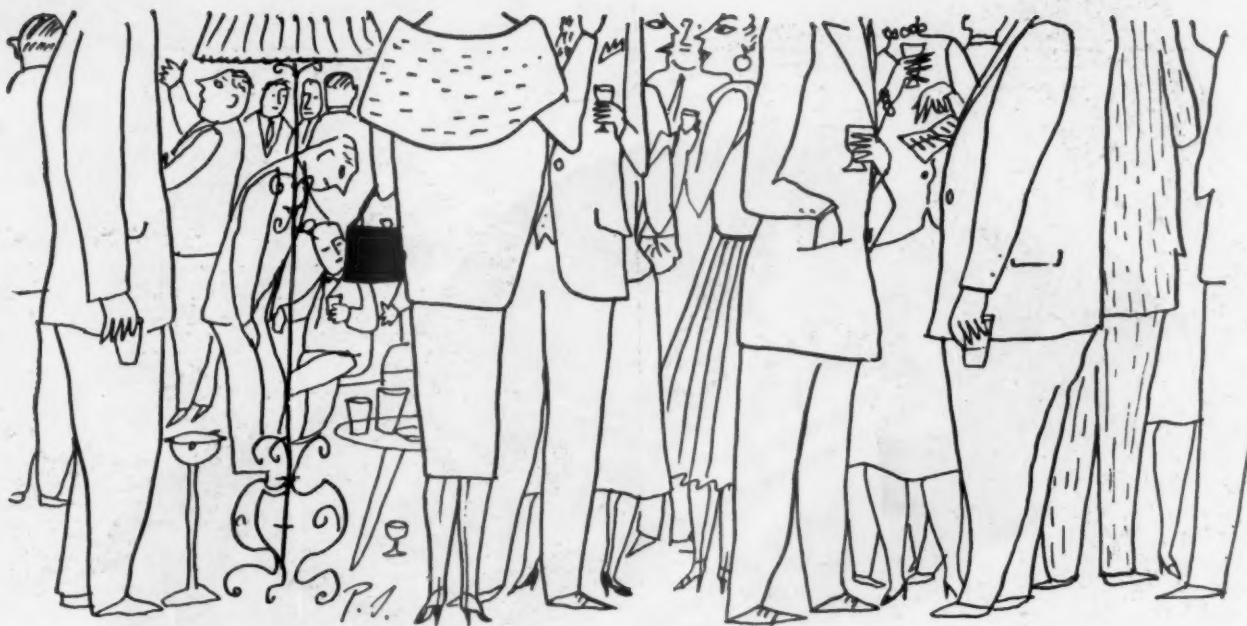
3 ABCHURCH YARD, CANNON STREET, E.C.4

15A PALL MALL, S.W.1

*'Yours  
for Life'*







## the things they say!



*That's a natty suit you're wearing!*

*Glad you like it.*

*One of these new synthetics, I suppose?*

*Yes, it's one of the latest — 'Terylene'.*



*Hmm. I suppose in a couple of years we'll all be dressed in synthetics from head to toe?*

Not quite. You can see from the papers that we're making more and more of these synthetic fibres, but I know enough to tell you that they're never likely to oust fibres such as cotton or wool as our main textile materials.

*Why is that? The old story of Britain again lagging behind in production?*

No, we're expanding the output of synthetic fibres at a great pace. But you've got to keep a sense of proportion — this country is consuming about 750 million pounds of cotton alone every year.

*Still, in time, when all the new synthetic fibre plants are completed . . . ?*

No, not even then. The natural fibres are generally cheaper.

You see, synthetics are made from expensive raw materials, in special plants that cost a lot of money to build.

*Then why use the synthetics at all?*

Because they possess qualities that are unique, and with some of them our textile industry has been able to create fabrics that have many attractive features, like easy washing, quick drying, and quite remarkable resistance to creasing.





Remember! Quality and dependability are guaranteed by the B.M.C. Used-Car Warranty and you are certain of a good deal when you sell.

The M.G. Magnette is powered by a twin-carburettor 1½ litre O.H.V. engine developing 60 b.h.p.

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Beneath this formal city attire beats the heart of a sporting motorist

— witness his M.G. Magnette! Handsomely it measures up to the demands of business and family affairs—in the elegance of its line, in its smooth, silent running, and in the quiet luxury of its interior. (Real leather upholstery—facia panel and woodwork in solid walnut.) Yet, out on the open road, it puts up a performance right in line with M.G. tradition. Surging acceleration, rigid road-holding, powerful braking—all the joys of sports motoring are there in generous measure.



1½ LITRE MAGNETTE

*Safety fast!*

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## A letter

*typed on the Lexikon All-Electric typewriter stands out from all others like a good deed in a naughty world.*

## A typist

*typing on the Lexikon All-Electric flies through her work with as little effort as a seagull takes to the wing.*

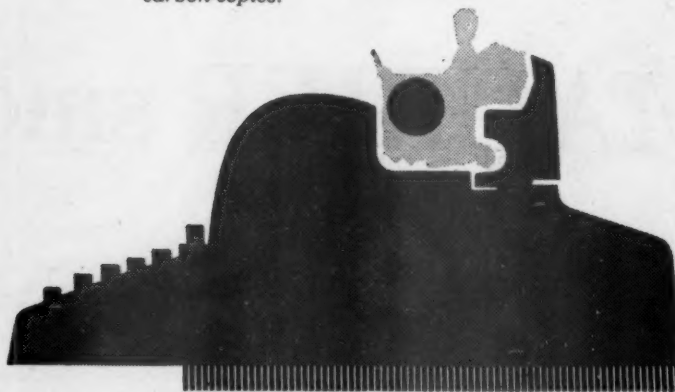
*The Lexikon All-Electric rises far above the limitations of a hand-powered machine, in providing so much more, so much better, with so much less effort—and at an overall cost which (on anything but the very shortest view) is no greater than you already pay!*

*All Electric operation — and all the advantages that go with it.*

*Superb clarity of typing equal to first-class printing.*

*Greatly increased speed with greatly reduced effort.*

*Gives many more—and sparkingly clear—carbon-copies.*



*A demonstration will gladly be arranged—without the slightest obligation.*

# olivetti

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